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„Re-adapting Jane Austen: Novels as  
an Intertextual Tool of Cinematic Transposition“

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## 1. Introduction

It is a truth universally acknowledged that a text in possession of a winning story must be in search of someone who turns it into an even more successful adaptation. This probably represents a statement every adapter would love to hear but unfortunately reality can sometimes be brutally disenchanting. In general, adaptations are still often considered second rate works and parasites that only benefit from the brilliance of the original they have adapted. Although with the decline of the concept of fidelity the overall tone in academic texts on adaptations has become more accepting, hostile views are still discernible in film reviews or statements like 'the book was different ...'.

Nevertheless, there is a shift observable especially among the younger generations, which seem to become more and more open-minded towards all kinds of adaptations. However, it remains to be seen whether their fondness for literary films is really genuine or whether it is only entailed by their distaste for literature due to a loss of fantasy and imagination in a visually over-stimulated society. Taking these shifts into consideration, cinematic adaptations of literature have become very helpful tools in the context of literature classes, for instance, and even if the original story is altered, discussions about the differences between the two versions of one story can still be as enlightening and exciting.

As the 20<sup>th</sup> century is commonly referred to as the media age, it can be readily grasped and understood that progress has not only had a bearing on didactics but has also been highly influential with respect to the arts. There has been no other discipline, however, in which the rise of the narrative film has wreaked so much upheaval as it is the case in the literary field. Even in academic circles, it is not until George Bluestone publishes his groundbreaking book *Novels into Film* in 1957 that film adaptations are for the first time seen as independent from their sources. Attitudes begin to change during the following decades and a certain degree of receptivity and interest of the general public in terms of adaptations becomes observable with the success of the cinematic versions of classic novels.

Especially the 1980s mark a period in which adaptations of the works of

well-known writers such as the Brontës, Hardy, Dickens, and above all Jane Austen, find their way into the cinemas and TV studios of that time. From then on, evermore filmic interpretations of classic novels emerge and even today Austen & Co still represent highly coveted inspirational sources for contemporary screenplay writers and film makers. However, in addition to the fairly faithful cinematic versions of Jane Austen's novels in the 1980s, a new phenomenon emerges during the 1990s, embedding the stories of Elizabeth, Emma, Anne & Co into a completely new context. *Clueless*, *Bridget Jones's Diary* and *Bride and Prejudice* only represent three examples of a far wider range of Austen adaptations that have chosen to update the stories, confronting the characters with a 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century context.

Apart from this type of radical translations, which largely remains faithful to the basic structure of the original text, the emergence of another phenomenon is discernible in films such as *You've Got Mail* and *The Lake House*, which are not officially based on novels but represent remakes of *The Shop Around the Corner* and *Il Mare*. Still, both remakes employ Jane Austen classics as a technique in order to establish intertextual references to the story and the characters in *Pride and Prejudice* and *Persuasion*. By means of repetition and other cinematic techniques that help emphasise certain elements in contrast to others, the novels are rendered extraordinarily present throughout the whole narrative. However, in this context the question remains as to whether *The Lake House* and *You've Got Mail* simply represent remakes of two former films or whether the impact the two novels have on the structure and characters rather make them literary adaptations at the same time.

## 2. Adaptation as a Transtextual Process

Taking a glance at the different types of discourse that have evolved around the phenomenon of imitation over the last centuries and millennia, the concept of adaption, like all theoretical concepts, represents in itself an excellent illustration of the reproduction and transformation of already existing mindsets. Tracing history back to the golden age of ancient Greek philosophy, the first attempts made towards a theory of adaptation, although not in the modern sense of the word, hark back to Socrates, who is given voice in Plato's dialogue *Republic* so as to present his views on the aspect of justice within the city-state. (cf. Melberg 10) In this first and rather derogatory approach to adaptation, mimesis is introduced as a term to describe the shadowing of reality for which it instantly becomes object to abrasive criticism due to its being a mere copy of the world.

Everyone, Plato claims, has internalised concepts of the objects they encounter in everyday life which only represent a copy of the mental original. At first sight, ten carnations of the same colour and kind may seem a hundred percent alike but upon taking a closer look at their shape and at the nuances of their colouring, differences will accumulate all at once and with the utmost probability small disparities in height, shape of the petals or colour saturation will come to the fore. However, in spite of these distinctive features the flowers will still be recognised as carnations due to the similarity of the underlying idea everyone has of them and which is closest to reality. Plato elaborates these views in what has come to be referred to as his cave allegory stating that people will only perceive the projection of reality unless they start scrutinising the origins of the shadows reality casts.

These Platonic views are also reflected in the philosopher's attitudes towards mimetic or representational poetry to which he categorically objects due to its delivering "poor and unreliable knowledge" (Melberg 10). He argues that, apart from its dangerous impact on the morals, poetry in its mimetic style driven by inspiration rather than facts can never function as a tool for revealing the truth, for it is nothing more than an imitation of the material world. With reference to Plato's cave allegory, it seems reasonable to assume that the world itself represents a reflection of reality implying that poetry must move



even further away from the original and hence needs to be considered a meta-imitation of what is thought of to be real. (cf. Melberg 10f.)

In the same context, Plato contrasts mimesis with the concept of diegesis, which he defines, according to Melberg, as the process of renarration by using one's *own* voice in either direct or indirect speech and which is thus the only authentic way of representing reality (cf. 16f.). As Gérard Genette more precisely points out in his *Narrative Discourse*, Plato distinguishes between two narrative modes, depending on whether or not a poet disguises himself by lending his own voice to one of his characters. (cf. *Narrative* 162) Hence, one may conclude that, from a Platonic point of view, a narrative situation can be estimated highly mimetic, and therefore inauthentic, if a poet presents the run of events by interposing a narrator who is not in a position of giving a trustworthy report. In contrast, this narrative device of representation through others is avoided in what Plato calls pure diegesis which does *not* pretend and consequently stays closer to reality. "The purely diegetical narrator is thus allowed to stay in the city while the mimetic is rejected." (Melberg 17)

Ironically, this extraordinarily hostile view on the status of representation and imitation in poetry alters with Aristotle, one of Plato's best-known students. It is he who, in his *Poetics*, defends the status of poetry and speaks in favour of its mimetic force. While Plato rejects the pedagogical value of poetry due to its imitating character, Aristotle reconsiders his mentor's concept of reality drawing the conclusion that the material world is not an imitation of an underlying conceptual truth but that these concepts are in fact the result of the totality of one's perceptions and experiences. Therefore, it is not the abstract idea of the carnation that makes people comprehend reality but rather a large number of carnations they encounter in nature that helps them create this mental concept.

While Plato's idea of poetry as pedagogically precarious is based on the assumption that it represents an imitation at third degree, Aristotle attacks this viewpoint when suggesting:

it is an instinct of human beings, from childhood, to engage in mimesis (indeed this distinguishes them from other animals: man is the most mimetic of all, and it is through mimesis that he develops his earliest understanding); [...] understanding gives great pleasure not only to philosophers but likewise to others too, though the latter have a smaller

share in it. This is why people enjoy looking at images, because through contemplating them it comes about that they understand and infer what each element mean [...]. (37f.)

From this statement it emerges that Aristotle does not simply reject Plato's views on mimetical poetry as morally reprehensible but in fact refutes his mentor's arguments by upgrading mimesis as pedagogically valuable. In Aristotelian terms, the concept of mimesis thus provides the audience with a portrayal of possible events and images that is actually meant to broaden their horizon and help them achieve a better understanding of reality. Aristotle justifies this theory by drawing a comparison between poets and historians stating that "it is not the poet's function to relate actual events, but the *kinds* of things that might occur and are possible in terms of probability and necessity. The difference between the historian and the poet is [...] that the one relates actual events, the other the kinds of things that might occur" (59). With this shift in how one looks at poetry, Aristotle is the first to equally respect both mimesis and diegesis as elements of poetry and in a wider sense elements of the art of narration, and thereby lays the foundation for modern theories of narratology.

This fundamental change in thinking from Plato to Aristotle represents in itself an excellent example of how ideas are brought into being, are then reconsidered and eventually changed into new concepts so as to include previously neglected aspects or reject the basic idea completely. However, looking at history from a broader perspective, the dissent between the two philosophers only marks the starting point of a variety of follow-up discourses scattering in all directions and being exposed to constant criticism and transformation. The dichotomy of mimesis and diegesis, for instance, "abruptly surged forth again in novel theory in the United States and England at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth [...] in the barely transposed terms of showing vs. telling" (Genette, *Narrative* 163). Apparently, Chatman has made a similar observation when stating that "[t]he difference between narration proper, the recounting of an event [...], and enactment, its unmediated presentation [...], corresponds to the classical distinction between mimesis and diegesis [...] or, in modern terms between telling and showing" (*Structure* 32). However, neither of them shows a tendency in perpetuating the

original discussion of morals and reality, completely eliding the pedagogical aspect on which the two ancients were of diverging views.

Taking into account that literary tradition, as an example of the wider notion of ideas and concepts in general, does not exist within fixed surroundings and that the zeitgeist is per se a product continuously affected by the cultural and political setting into which it is embedded, the question suggests itself as to whether or not originality is always completely new. Socrates lays the foundation for Plato and Aristotle's philosophical work which in turn forms the basis for the assumptions that Genette and Chatman draw. Each of the previous theories includes two aspects: a digest of pre-existing principles and an introduction of innovative views and ideas. In this manner Gérard Genette attacks the idea of mimesis in the Aristotelian sense, i.e. as a concept for dramatic representation, in the context of narratology:

in contrast to dramatic representation, no narrative can 'show' or 'imitate' the story it tells. All it can do is tell it in a manner that which is detailed, precise, 'alive,' and in that way give more or less the *illusion of mimesis* – which is the only narrative mimesis, for this single and sufficient reason: that narration, oral or written, is in fact of language, and language signifies without imitating. (*Narrative* 164)

As Terry Eagleton points out in his introduction to literary theory, the tradition of narratology did not exist as a discipline until the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and was coined as a term by theorists such as Claude Lévi-Strauss, Tzvetan Todorov, Gérard Genette and Roland Barthes (cf. 90). Although Aristotle's *Poetics* form the uncontested basis for modern narrative theories, it cannot be denied that Genette has a point when he says that the concept of mimesis does not apply in a narratological context but is restricted to its quality of describing representational aspects in drama. Therefore, based on Aristotle's ideas, a new tradition evolved from the old, driven by a need for new analytical devices, and eventually established a more or less radically adapted version of the old concept meant to fit the new circumstances.

As can be assumed, adaptation is not only restricted to philosophical and literary discourse but represents a ubiquitous aspect of modern times. Gunter Gebauer and Christoph Wolf even go so far in their work *Mimesis: Kultur* –

*Kunst – Gesellschaft* as to maintain that we live in an era where nothing is left to imitate allowing for a definition of modern societies as an adaptation of the totality of its history (cf. 437). However, this suggests rather dismal prospects regarding the answer to the aforementioned question of originality because if nothing was left to imitate and everything must be considered an adaptation of some pre-existing entity, Plato's cave allegory would be proved correct. An aspect that need not be disregarded here is the ambiguity of the word 'original' that, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, may have slight but crucial differences in meaning implied.

First of all, it is defined as "pertaining to the origin, beginning or earliest stage of something" which is synonymous to 'first' as opposed to 'last'. When juxtaposing this definition with a second one, it becomes clear that they express all but the same because "capable of original ideas or action", as opposed to 'unoriginal', includes the aspect of creativity. Finally, 'original' is described in the sense of 'not replicated' when giving the definition of being "applied to anything in relation to that which is a representation or reproduction of it" (s.v. original). Taking a glance at the second and third definition of the word, the crucial distinction does not lie in the aspect of creativity but rather in the process of replication. While the third interpretation of the word is completely opposed to anything that has been copied, the second one emphasises the differences an object must show in comparison to previously existing ones. Hence, one may conclude that an adapted version of a pre-existing entity does not necessarily have to be entirely unduplicated as long as it exhibits original and innovative elements. The question here would then no longer be that of originality in the sense of which was first and last but rather that of creativity in working with the first and developing it further.

Assuming that, to a certain extent, almost everything can serve as the basis for replication, imitation and adaptation, the same must equally hold true for texts in any spoken, written or visual form. A crucial aspect that has somewhat become clear so far is the fact that there is always a connection of some kind between the original and the adapted. From an even more general perspective, the interdependence of texts is not simply restricted to the field of adaptations but applies to every text. Putting it in Gérard Genette's terms,

adaptations merely represent a sub-category of what he calls hypertexts which themselves function as a sub-category to the umbrella term of transtextuality. Genette presents his concept of transtextuality in his theoretical work *Palimpseste. Die Literatur auf zweiter Stufe* introducing the following five different relations that can be established between texts: intertextuality, paratextuality, hypertextuality, metatextuality, and architextuality. Although Genette has developed this concept with respect to literary texts, it can easily be expanded by relating it to Jacques Derrida's views on text as a universal entity. Since text represents nothing more than a means of conveying and therefore a starting point for the negotiation of meaning, almost everything can be perceived as text (cf. Engelmann 107f.). Hence, Genette's concept of transtextuality need not necessarily be restricted to the realm of literary analysis but seems to be equally applicable to a wider definition of text as everything carrying meaning.

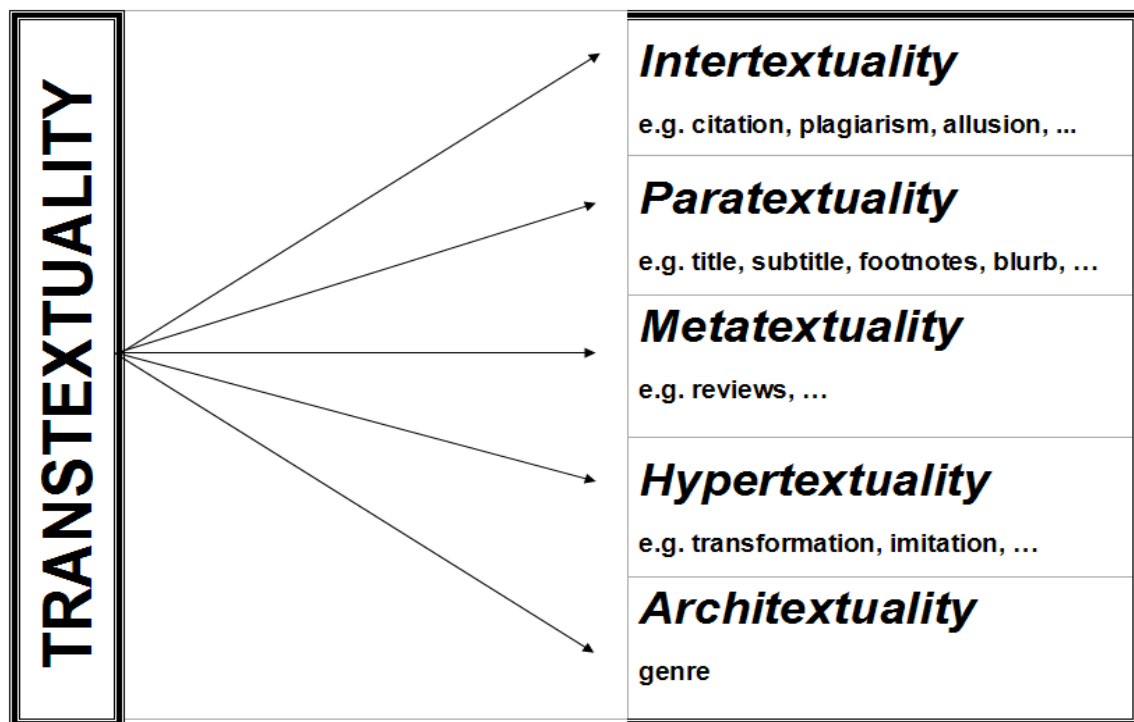


Fig. 1 – Transtextuality according to G. Genette (cf. Middeke 235)

As illustrated in the figure above, all five forms of transtextual relations evolve around the relationship of one text to another. The concept of *intertextuality* is in

its basic definition self-explanatory, i.e. a text that is present within another text. Thus, such intertexts are per definition extracts taken from other sources to which they seek to establish references in various ways by means of citations, plagiarisms or allusions. *Paratextuality*, on the other hand, is related to what is *around* a literary text, including aspects such as title, subtitle, foreword, blurb, cover, footnotes, etc. The third type of transtextual relations, namely that of *metatextuality*, is again self-defining as in this case a text is meant to examine and analyse another text by automatically positioning the outcome of this process at a meta-level. Such metatexts, as they are called, can range from reviews via interpretations through to diploma theses and other types of academic analysis. *Hypertextuality*, which along with intertextuality is the most relevant category in the context of adaptation analysis, describes the relation of a text B which superimposes a text A without giving a comment. Here, text B more or less functions as an imitation or adaptation of the pre-existing text A to which it either openly confesses or rejects affiliation. The last category of transtextual relations is that of *architextuality* and can be briefly summarised as being almost synonymous with the concept of genre (cf. Genette, *Palimpseste* 9ff.).

## **2.1. The Hypertextual Dimension of Transtextual Relations**

As becomes clear on the basis of Genette's model, the categories of inter- and hypertextuality represent the most important types of transtextual relations in the context of adaptation studies: the former due to its technique of embedding one text into another one and the latter for reflecting the transformation of one text into another one. The strong interconnection between the two categories apparently results from the fact that in the very moment a source text enters a hypertextual relationship, its adaptation automatically establishes intertextual references to its source. In all probability, this principle equally holds true for all kinds of texts in Derrida's sense of the word and this is similarly reflected in the way Linda Hutcheon so nicely puts it in *A Theory of Adaptation* when emphasising that "texts are said to be mosaics of citations that are visible and invisible, heard or silent; they are always written and read. So, too, are

adaptations, but with the added proviso that they are also acknowledged as adaptations of *specific texts*" (21).

### 2.1.1. Defining Adaptation

The concept of mimesis in the Aristotelian sense, as opposed to Plato's perception of reality, is to be understood as an imitation which due to the pleasure of comprehension sets off a learning process. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the same notion has been picked up by psychoanalysts where particular attention is paid to a child's ability to adapt as being a pivotal trigger for behavioural development. "From the beginning the child molds and unfolds in the matrix of the mother-infant dual unit. [...] The adaptive point of view is most relevant in early infancy – the infant being born into the very crest of the adaptational demands on him" (Mahler 216). This ability to adjust to new circumstances can also be detected in the field of evolutionary theory which works on the basis of what has generally become known as 'natural selection' or 'the survival of the fittest'. The decisive idea behind this principle is that every species needs to adapt to its surroundings so as to ensure both their own survival and that of the whole species. The same approach has later been applied to the economy manifesting itself within the principle of the free market. Taking all this into account, the observation of the ubiquity of adaptations throughout history goes even further in this context leading up to the existentialist question of whether there is a universal human need for adaptation or, to put it in Sartrean terms, whether the ability of adapting represents a decisive factor in our perpetual search for essence.<sup>1</sup>

The *Oxford English Dictionary* provides five definitions of the term adaptation the last one representing the biological explanation as already stated above. The four remaining entries allow for the establishment of two different notions from which one can come closer to defining adaption, namely being that

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<sup>1</sup> With the statement "existence precedes essence" Jean Paul Sartre coins these two terms in his essay *L'existentialisme est un Humanisme* which he delivered to the members of Club Maintenant on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 1945. The principal idea on which he bases his philosophy is that of man's condemnation to freedom and his free choice to create his own essence. (cf. 26) Connecting these existentialist views to adaptation studies, the question is that of whether or not adaptation serves as a tool in the process of creating one's own distinct identity.

of the 'process' as opposed to that of the 'product':

1. The action or process of adapting, fitting or suiting one thing to another. [...]
2. The process of modifying a thing so as to suit new conditions: as, the modification of a piece of music to suit a different instrument or different purpose; the alteration of a dramatic composition to suit a different audience; [...]
3. the condition or state of being adapted. [...]
4. A special instance of adapting; and hence, *concr.* an adapted form or copy, a reproduction, of anything modified to suit new users. (s.v. adaptation)

From these definitions it can be deduced that adaptations differ from imitations mainly in their relation to the instance they refer to. The intention of imitations is by no means that of modification but rather consists in trying to stick as close to the original as possible. However, although imitations never arrive at the point where they become one with their source entirely, they always try to make people believe they are the original. In contrast, adaptations do not pretend to be what they are not, namely the original, but are defined as modification products which can be the result of various processes. In the second definition mentioned above, examples are given from the contexts of music and drama both seeking to suit a different purpose. This represents the most crucial aspect that distinguishes imitations from adaptations for the only intention of the former is to copy its original whereas the purpose of the latter unquestionably varies depending on its context.

A second point that can be drawn from the definitions given by the *Oxford English Dictionary* are the different angles from which one can approach the phenomenon of adaptations, perceiving them as either a product or a process. Hutcheon also provides this distinction but goes even further in suggesting a more specific differentiation of adaptation as a process because this category appears to head in two different directions. Adaptation, she points out, "can be described as the following: [a]n acknowledged transposition of a recognizable other work or works, [a] creative *and* an interpretative act of appropriation/salvaging [and a]n intertextual engagement with the adapted work" (8). Upon closer inspection of these definitions, their underlying notion is apparently based on the sender-receiver model as applied in linguistics and communication studies. In a similar way, this concept suggests the idea of three



different factors being involved in the process of communication, namely a sender, a receiver and a message that is conveyed via some kind of medium. In the context of this transference, two processes referred to as encoding and decoding occur basically representing the scrambling of a message which is then transferred over a medium and eventually becomes unscrambled by the receiver (cf. Faulstich 28f.).

Narrowing the topic down to cultural adaptations and again within this realm to literary films and remakes, one can assume the adapter to be the sender who by encoding his/her work within the medium of film conveys a text that in a second step becomes decoded by the spectator or receiver. However, as this holds true for every communicative situation, one must not be oblivious to the fact that in the context of adaptations the adapter needs to be characterised as both a sender within a new communicative situation and a receiver within one or more previous ones. Thus within the process of decoding a novel or a film the adapter establishes his/her own interpretation of the text which then becomes encoded within and conveyed in the form of his/her own work and is once more decoded by a new audience.

With respect to the problem of terminology, hypertextuality “refers to the relation between one text, which Genette calls ‘hypertext,’ to an anterior text, or ‘hypotext,’ which the former transforms, modifies, elaborates, or extends” (Stam, *Fidelity* 66). In *A Theory of Adaption* Linda Hutcheon draws upon the same assumption but applies a different terminology while at the same time objecting to the expressions “source” and “original”. She employs the term “adapted text” for what Genette defines as the “hypotext” turning the “hypertext”, although not explicitly mentioned, into the adapting text (cf. xiii) However, it needs to be clarified at this point that both ‘source’ and ‘original’, although rejected by Hutcheon, represent useful terms for describing the relation between texts as long as they do not result in any evaluative statement regarding the films’ quality.

To sum up what has been argued thus far, a hypertext can be regarded as the outcome of an interpretation process in the context of which the film maker decodes a hypotext. As Hutcheon points out, “adapters are first interpreters and then creators” (18). Hence, when turning novels into films for

instance, film makers abandon their receptive position by presenting their proper interpretation and at the same time initiating a new process of decoding. As a result, adaptation as a process can be defined in two ways discriminating between the creational process of the adapter and the interpretative effort made by the audience. At the centre of these processes there is the product as the outcome of the interpretative work done by the adapter. In this sense, it holds true that adaptation is always some kind of repetition, “but repetition without replication” (Hutcheon 7).

#### 2.1.1.1. Modes of adaptations

If one looks at the diversity of film adaptations, one cannot help but recognise the various forms in which adaptations occur. Taking Jane Austen’s novel *Emma*, which provides the basis for several cinematic transpositions, as an example, it cannot be denied that most of its adaptations seek to remain as close to their hypotext with respect to time, place and characters as possible. In contrast, the 1995 American comedy film *Clueless* “brings the novel into our own era, successfully translating *Emma* into the California high school culture of the 1990s” (Ferriss 122). Although at first glance the two stories appear to have nothing in common due to their surface differences, the underlying structures register strong parallels regarding character quality and story line. ‘Caring’, ‘helpful’ and an ‘unlucky affection for coupling’ are only some of the traits Emma Woodhouse and Cher Horowitz share. However, despite these analogies, interrelations between the novel and its more faithful translations are probably more easily recognisable than in the context of *Clueless*. The same holds true when it comes to a comparison of the 1999 drama film *Eyes Wide Shut* with Arthur Schnitzler’s *Traumnovelle* on which it is based.

As a result, one may conclude that adaptations show strong tendencies towards variation in recognisability depending on their closeness-distance-relationship with a hypotext. A hypertext can thus either remain faithful to its hypotext or veer away from it turning into a loose adaptation which is often characterised by a fundamental change in its surface structure as can be seen in the examples above. Starting from similar observations, Geoffrey Wagner in

his book *The Novel and the Cinema* suggests three categorical modes of adaptations of which the first is termed 'transposition', "in which a novel is directly given on the screen, with a minimum of apparent interference" (222). As has already been described, this mode of adaptation attempts to stay as close as possible to the text it is based on and is thus often considered a literal translation. The second category is referred to as 'commentary', "where an original is taken and either purposely or inadvertently altered in some respect" (Wagner 223). This mode is mainly concerned with the way stories are reconstructed and re-emphasised as opposed to 'analogy' which represents the last mode of this trisection. Here the original story simply serves as the starting point or "a fairly considerable departure for the sake of making *another* work of art" (Wagner 227). The majority of Jane Austen novels turned into films can be categorised as either transpositions or commentaries. However, this is not the case with *Clueless*, where the audience is presented with an analogy which at first sight has completely distanced itself from the novel leaving the part of the audience that is not familiar with the hypotext in the dark. Another example of an analogy in the context of Jane Austen novels can be drawn upon in the form of *Bridget Jones's Diary*, where the film is loosely based on the novel *Pride and Prejudice* as well as the 1995 BBC TV program of the same title starring Colin Firth in the role of Mr Darcy.

Wagner has not been the only one to develop a tripartite division of adaptations within categorical modes. Dudley Andrew, for example, has set up a comparable trichotomy applying the terms borrowing, intersection, and transformation. When applying the mode of 'borrowing' "the artist employs, more or less extensively, the material, idea or form of an earlier, generally successful text" (Andrew 30). This mode can be linked to what Wagner defines as commentary although the two of them appear to be at variance as regards the frequency in which this mode happens to occur. While Andrew maintains borrowing to be the most frequently applied mode of adaptation, Wagner claims his mode of transposition to be the predominant method. This mode has its counterpart in what Andrew refers to as 'intersection' where "the uniqueness of the original text is preserved to such an extent that it is unintentionally left unassimilated in adaptation" (30). The third distinction made in this context is

that of 'transformation' which is basically synonymous to the idea of analogy. However, since transformation distances itself the most from the original text, Andrew goes beyond Wagner's definition when hinting at the discrepancy entailed by the discussion of fidelity. In this regard, he distinguishes between two aspects that need to be taken into consideration: "[f]idelity of adaptation is conventionally treated in relation to the 'letter' and to the 'spirit' of a text, as though adaptation were the rendering of an interpretation of a legal precedent" (Andrew 31). According to Andrew, 'letter' is translatable from one medium into another without any major difficulties including factors such as the characters and their surroundings. In contrast, the aspect of the 'spirit' of a text is considered more problematic as it includes facets such as tone and imagery which are almost untranslatable in a faithful way.

The most coherent trichotomy of modes in reference to terminology, though, is provided by Linda Costanzo Cahir, who in *Literature into Film* introduces the distinction of literal, traditional and radical translations, which by and large correspond to the aforementioned tripartitions. (cf. 16f.) However, Cahir strongly objects to the term 'adaptation' arguing that the meaning of the word in this context fails to describe the process sufficiently because "the same substantive entity which entered the process exists, even as it undergoes modification – sometimes radical mutation – in its efforts to *accommodate* itself to its new environment" (Cahir 14). As a result, the term 'translation' is suggested instead so as to express the characteristics of this process more specifically. Giving preference to this definition, emphasis is put on the independence of the hypertext from its hypotext even though the first remains connected to the latter to a certain extent. "Through the process of translation a fully new text – *a materially different entity* – is made, one that simultaneously has a strong relationship with its original source, yet is fully independent from it" (Cahir 14). This is also the reason, so Cahir says, why an audience that is unfamiliar with the original can succeed in comprehending the translation.

However, it seems very unlikely that a solution to the problem of the constant downgrading of adaptations, or translations, can only be found in the field of terminology. Taking a closer look at the nature of translations, one may imprudently argue that they are nothing more than a text put into another

language. Therefore, one may reasonably expect that the crucial point lies somewhere totally different, namely in the nature of the hypertext and its relation to the source, from whose shadow it needs to step out of. As Linda Hutcheon points out: “[j]ust as there is no such thing as a literal translation, there can be no literal adaptation” (16). Thus, adaptations need to be accepted as autonomous entities that apart from the closeness-distance relationship represent independent works from their sources.

#### 2.1.1.2. Literary film or Remake?

As is commonly acknowledged, a consistent use of terminology represents a vital aspect as regards academic discourses so as to ensure comprehensible communication and expertise. One needs to be keenly aware of the fact, though, that labelling, as already encountered above, always runs the risk of pedantry and must, thus, not result in a quarrel disregarding the actual phenomena for the sake of terminology. However, when reading only a fraction of the literature available on adaptations, one soon gets the impression that there is no mutual consent on what the term actually means, and this unfortunately does not improve when reading further, leaving basic questions such as the following unacknowledged: where does adaptation start and where does it end? Does the term ‘literary film’ represent a sub-category of an umbrella term and where do remakes come in?

Film theory appears to be extraordinarily restrictive in this matter since the majority of critical texts evolve around novels adapted for the screen – an aspect that plays a determining role in contributing to a definition of adaptation as the cinematic transposition of novels only. In the writings of well-known and eminently respectable film critics and scholars, such as André Bazin, George Bluestone, James Naremore, or Robert Stam, the analytical focus mainly rests upon adaptations from literature into film, and although neither of them goes as far to state literary film as being the only form of adaptation, the frequent use of the word adaptation in this sense is tremendously conducive to coining the term. As André Bazin states in the first sentence of his essay *Adaptation, or the Cinema as Digest*: “[t]he problem of digest and adaptations is usually posed

within the framework of literature” (19). However, this imprecision in terminology does not pose so much of a problem within the discourse of literary film as such but can lead to entanglements when it comes to positioning of literary film in relation to other forms of adaptation such as the remake.

Amusingly, this discrepancy bears a resemblance to the problem of Canadian identity as sung about in *I am not American* by the Canadian group Arrogant Worms. In this song grievance is voiced that the word ‘American’, although meant to describe two continents, has been reduced in its meaning to represent only the US American identity. Hence, a Canadian always runs the risk of being mistaken for someone from the United States if not being precise enough about his/her nationality. Although this cultural digression is slightly off-topic, it represents an illustrative example of how one frequently emerging aspect of a common whole can adumbrate everything else. The same holds true for a definition of adaptation in a film-theoretical context. The frequent use of the term ‘adaptation’ in the sense of literature turned into film overshadows various other forms of adaptations making people become accustomed to this imprecise definition while at the same time completely ignoring other types that focus upon sources other than literature. Although the 1998 historical drama film *Elizabeth* as well as its 2007 sequel *Elizabeth: The Golden Age* are not based on novels, they loosely adapt the life of Queen Elizabeth I of England to the screen. However, nobody would probably refer to them as historical adaptations.

Apart from these overgeneralisations, there is a second and more serious problem in reducing a definition of adaptation solely to literary sources for this manner of defining the term unavoidably results in the assumption that, from a film-theoretical point of view, adaptations are characterised by a change of medium. Hutcheon, for instance, claims that “[t]he form changes with adaptation; the content persists” (10).<sup>2</sup> Since no sufficient explanation is given at any point as to what ‘form’ is actually meant to refer to, one needs to assume that it implies nothing more than the representation of signs, i.e. some kind of

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<sup>2</sup> However, Hutcheon contradicts herself within the very next sentence when she brings up the following question: “But what exactly constitutes that transferred and transmuted ‘content’?” In the following paragraphs she then provides the reader with information on how elements such as themes, characters, the story, points of view, etc. become altered in the course of adaptation.

language by means of which content is conveyed. It is a given that film and novel work on the basis of different sign systems and it is clear that “one may [...] see visually through the eye or imaginatively through the mind. And between the percept of the visual image and the concept of the mental image lies the root difference between the two media” (Bluestone 1). Although medial change can function as a trigger, it does not remain the only reason for adaptation since content, as opposed to Hutcheon’s statement, can and does very well change from one context to another. To bring it back to the example of *Clueless*, it is not the medial change that makes Cher Horowitz wear an Armani dress but rather the decision to shift the temporal context into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, one may conclude that both content and form are determined by the context in which they occur and which they are arranged to fit.

If one assumed that adaptations require a change of medium, what about remakes then? This consideration marks the point where entanglement starts since remakes apparently represent adaptations within the same medium. Jochen Manderbach, for instance, defines the remake as: “Neuverfilmung eines schon einmal verfilmten Stoffes. Als Remake bezeichnet man nur solche Filme, die einen Vorläufer mehr oder weniger detailgetreu nachvollziehen – meist aktualisiert, bisweilen in andere Genres übertragen, gelegentlich auch in ganz andere Schauplätze“ (13). From this it follows that the remake is a “special pattern which re-represents and explains at a different time through varying perceptions, previous narratives and experiences” (Horton and McDougal 2). A remake can thus be considered as a film turned into another film within a different context.

In comparison to literary film, the remake is not based on a literary source but draws upon an already existing film which it seeks to adapt. The *Sachlexikon Film* provides a very useful definition to highlight the difference between these two forms of adaptation:

Remake ist die neue Version eines bereits existierenden Films, die sich mehr oder weniger detailgetreu auf den Vorgänger bezieht. Wiederverfilmungen klassischer Literatur gelten im allgemeinen [sic!] nicht als R., wenn sie sich stärker an der literarischen Vorlage als an dem filmischen Vorgänger orientieren. (249)

As a result, it is a given that literary films differ from remakes in their media-crossing character but this still does not change their status of adaptations. However, there are cases where remakes due to financial reasons and profit increase enter into relations with a literary source which has already been adapted by another film. Bearing this triangular relationship in mind, in his essay *Twice-Told Tales* Leitch defines the remake as “a movie based on another movie, or competing with another movie based on the same property” which it seeks to replace. (38)

To put it in a nutshell, literary theory, in comparison with film theory, tends to provide a wider notion of adaptation, as for example in Genette’s model of transtextuality, following the definition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* that the process of adapting does not depend so much on a change in medium but rather seeks to transform a text so as to suit new circumstances. James Finn Garner’s *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories*, for instance, stays within the literary subgenre of fairytales but transforms them to fit the purpose of political correctness which the author intends to spoof. Hence, the medium per se can be regarded as irrelevant in providing a basic definition for adaptations since it simply functions as a technological means of representation. Against the background of Genette’s model of transtextuality, both remakes and literary films represent hypertexts of pre-existing hypotexts and can thus be considered adaptations. Farther back in *A Theory of Adaptation* Hutcheon then highlights correctly that “[r]emakes are invariably adaptations because of changes in the context”. (170)

### 2.1.2. Motives for Adaptations

Returning to the observation of the omnipresence of adaptations in postmodern societies, it seems reasonable at this point to renew the existentialist question of essence raised elsewhere. Is there a universal need for adaptations in our modern world? As has already been pointed out, adaptations have been a characteristic of human behaviour within living memory, they represent a basic principle of evolution and they have eventually found their way into the study of psychoanalysis as well as literary theory, film theory and various other



disciplines. Although our delight in this phenomenon does not appear to be biologically determined, there is still no answer to the question of why adaptations are all around us. On the tube one frequently encounters people devouring books that apparently represent adapted versions based on stories that already exist, in the streets one sees cars that look exactly like other cars just of different makes, in the supermarkets similar products are neatly arranged next to each other, and when one eventually glances at the cinema program one discovers that *Alice in Wonderland* is currently being screened and that *Dorian Gray* is soon going to be released.

#### 2.1.2.1. The Pleasure of Re-experiencing

Approaching this question from a psychological point of view it can be stated that “[e]xperience and development themselves depend upon recognizable patterns of repetition, novelty and resolution. [...] [T]he function of art [is] to defamiliarize the familiar – to make us experience the commonplace in new ways” (Horton and McDougal 6). This perspective on the function of adaptations rests upon the psychological assumption that one learns through repetitive experience. Drawing upon the fields of didactics and pedagogy, behaviourism probably represents the best-known theory which works exactly on the basis of ongoing repetition. With the help of imitation in addition to drills, i.e. the frequent reoccurrence of linguistic items, learners are believed to acquire the language they need for communication. Although this method is regarded as outdated today the basic idea of re-experiencing lives on in almost all language acquisition theories that have followed. Further crucial aspects involved in the processes of repetition and acquisition are the development of skills that enable learners to interpret the meaning of new words within a known context, and thereby the pleasure a learner can take in recognition.

The same principle holds true for adaptations in any way, shape or form since “[w]ith adaptations, we seem to desire repetition as much as change” (Hutcheon 9). Thus, when watching a remake or literary film, one joins an interactive process of communication, comparison and interpretation of a hypertext in connection with the hypotext. When taking a look at children, it is

interesting to see that many of them tend to read a book again and again. Moreover, this type of reading habit is not only restricted to children but can also be observed in adults. The pleasure one seems to take in encountering new aspects within habitual surroundings appears to be an enormous motivation. Even if a novel is not an adaptation as such, the images created in the process of re-reading and re-interpretation very well are, because they are held up against an already existing interpretation of the story. As Robert Eberwein points out in the context of remakes but which equally holds true for adaptations in general: “[a] remake is a kind of reading and re-reading of the original” and thus the re-encountering of familiar surroundings (15). However, adaptations are also characterised by differences to the original which the audience seems to enjoy as much as the repetitive aspects. “To focus on repetition alone, in other words, is to suggest only the potentially conservative element in the audience response to adaptation” (Hutcheon 115). In contrast, with change the audience is invited to re-experience the world of the original in a completely new and refreshing way.

#### 2.1.2.2. Personal Reasons

It is absurd to assume that an artist’s wish for adaptation is based on his/her fondness for repetition. “It is obvious that adapters must have their own personal reasons for deciding first to do an adaptation and then choosing which adapted work and what medium to do it in” (Hutcheon 92). Hence, adapters do not only adapt a work but they reinvent and recreate it by giving it a personal touch. After something has gone through a process of adaptation, it can no longer be considered the original but has become a work of its own created under different circumstances, within different surroundings and based on different intentions. Thus, the purpose of adaptations does not lie within the act itself and can only be found within the adapter’s context.

In most instances, the personal aspiration for adaptation lies in the emotional connection an adapter has with an original text. The outcome is strongly characterised by this emotional bond and can thus head into different directions depending on the adapters intention either to pay tribute to the

original or to criticise it. The homage, for instance, shows respect to its hypotext whereas a parody aims at something completely different by making fun of the original. However, an adapter's decision to recreate a work need not necessarily lie within the content of a hypotext. Spoofs such as *Scary Movie*, for instance, represent a reaction to the revival of horror films in the 1990s and the producers' intention to make fun of them. Although in this case the content as such is not the main trigger for adaptation, it still remains a crucial factor since "watching *Scary Movie* (2000) without knowledge of the *Scream* (1996-2000) trilogy [is] probably an (even more) empty experience" (Lacey 89).

Further aspects that often become subject to change and adaptation are the categories of time and place which also represent crucial determinants in establishing the cultural background of a story. The 2004 romantic film *Bride and Prejudice*, for example, adapts the story of Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice* by transposing it to the cultural backgrounds of 21<sup>st</sup> century England and India. In an interview with the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* the director of the film reveals his personal reasons for his decision to adapt the novel when explaining that "[e]very element of the film had to be a careful negotiation of how Eastern or how Western to go. I wanted 'Bride & Prejudice' to be an affectionate look at Bollywood movies, to poke fun at them and pay my respects to them" (Nechak).

#### 2.1.2.3. Economic Perspectives and Legal Loopholes

In the context of adaptations and above all when it comes to remakes, the aspect of hypertextual relations is frequently described as parasitic. Even if this argument held be held true in terms of content being transformed so as to shape a hypertext, it would never bear out from an economical point of view. Parasitism normally implies the fact that damage is done to a host when entering an unwanted relationship with a parasite that, on the other hand, benefits from these circumstances. However, this is simply one way of looking at a symbiotic relationship for there need not necessarily be harm involved. Mutualism, in contrast to parasitism, includes and describes bonds in which both parties profit from their mutual relationship. Applying this fairly important

differentiation to the field of adaptations, it turns out that literary films and remakes are completely different in terms of their relation to a hypotext: the former needs to be regarded as mutualistic in its nature whereas the latter indeed shows parasitic ambitions.

In order to stop parasitic encroachments as described above, most countries have established a legal basis regarding authorship to define copyright infringements and to grant compensation where such violations occur. A crucial factor in the context of copyright regulations is that ideas as such cannot claim protection, meaning that the only aspect that can be protected by copyright is the way they have come to be expressed. However, it is important to bear in mind that copyright laws may differ from one country to the other and in some they may not even exist at all. In the United States, for instance, the current copyright law has its roots in the Copyright Act of 1976 providing the basis for the following legal situation:

(a) Copyright protection subsists [...] in original works of authorship fixed in any tangible medium of expression [...] from which they can be perceived, reproduced, or otherwise communicated, either directly or with the aid of a machine or device. Works of authorship include the following categories: (1) literary works; [...] (6) motion pictures and other audiovisual works; [...] (b) In no case does copyright protection for an original work of authorship extend to any idea, procedure, process, system, method of operation, concept, principle, or discovery, regardless of the form in which it is described, explained, illustrated, or embodied in such work. (§ 102)

It may well be concluded from this wording of the law that it is not always as easy as it may seem to ensure the protection of an original work. Tackling the problem of radical translations, for example, the way an idea is expressed in the adapted work fundamentally changes and within this process often becomes incomparable to the original. For that matter, the law becomes even more evasive by limiting exclusive copyrights and including a section on fair use. The main function of this section is to guarantee legal reproduction of original works “for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research” (§ 107). Although this section does not show any relevance for adaptations at first glimpse, it is specified further in the third paragraph that copyright infringements strongly

depend on “the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole” (§ 107). Therefore, it can become extremely difficult to pin adaptations down based on legalities because change needs to be regarded as a given in this context.

Taking into consideration that copyrights depend on expression rather than ideas, the phenomenon of literature into film poses an enormous problem in this context. Due to their different techniques in representation, i.e. written word vs. images, the way of expression unavoidably changes as well. Hence,

[i]n the case of a novel adapted to film, the courts study the plot, mood, characters and character development, pace, setting, and sequence of events, but because so much has to be cut from a novel and because so many adapting agents are involved in a collaboratively produced film, the adaptation is rarely ever close enough to warrant prosecution. (Hutcheon 90)

However, in terms of literary film, this legal framework does not play so much of a role as the relationship here appears to be a rather mutualistic one in which the literary work tends to profit from its adaptation. “[O]ften a film version boosts sales of the novel, as publishers know. They even release new editions with photos from the film on the cover” (Hutcheon 90). This has been the case, for instance, as regards the 1995 Modern Library paperback edition of *Pride and Prejudice* after its successful adaptation to the screen. As has already been mentioned, Colin Firth shaped the character of Mr Darcy in the context of this BBC TV program eventually making it to the cover of the novel. Assuming that the sales figures of the novel increased due to the success of the TV program, this provides an excellent illustration of the way a hypotext can benefit from its adaptation to the screen. Bazin puts it in even more concrete terms when stating that “[i]ndeed most of the films that are based on novels merely usurp their titles, even though a good lawyer could probably prove that these movies have an indirect value, since it has been shown that the sale of a book always increases after it has been adapted to the screen” (22).

As opposed to literary film, the situation is completely different when it comes to remakes which do not exist peacefully alongside an original work but aim at making the original disappear from the scene. Hence, remakes must

“seek to please both audiences who have seen the films on which they are based and audiences who have not” (Leitch 41). The challenge here does not so much lie in gaining new audiences but rather in getting those already familiar with the story on board by making them forget or even curse the original. Hence, in its function as a remake, a hypertext is not in a position to enter a mutualistic relationship with an original without at least partly reducing itself to absurdity.

In true remakes, the notion of empire is essentially economic rather than philosophical, since the producers of the remake wish not only to accommodate the original story to a new discourse and a new audience but to annihilate the model they are honouring – to eliminate any need or desire to see the film they seek to replace. (Leitch 50)

In the context of the 2001 crime comedy *Ocean's Eleven*, for instance, the attempt has been made to adapt the 1960 original of the same title starring well-known Hollywood greats such as Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis, Jr. In order to offer a similar histrionic potential and make the 2001 version of the film even more exciting for a contemporary audience, a careful selection of stars had to be made. With well-known actors and actresses such as George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Andy Garcia and Julia Roberts the producers of the remake have not only managed to gather a reputable star ensemble that appeals to a large audience but they have also accomplished the mission to eliminate the original since with utmost probability, the majority of spectators now associate *Ocean's Eleven* with the remake. Although there are various other ways of calling an audience's attention to a new version of a film, this example represents a perfect illustration of a true remake in Leitch's sense of the word:

The parasitism of the remake becomes clearest when re-releasing becomes a likely possibility, when the old film is available alongside the new for video rental, or when both films are in release in the same market at the same time, generally because the remake is a foreign-language version of the original film specifically designed to appeal to a foreign audience more likely to see it than the original on which it is based. (Leitch 40)

However, the parasitic nature of the remake goes even further when it comes to

adaptations of literary films. While producers of remakes are legally bound to pay adaptation fees to the makers of the original film, no payment of compensation is usually granted for remakes of literary adaptations. In such a case, film makers tend to stretch the law by:

[purchasing] adaptation rights from the authors of the property on which that film was based, even though the remake is competing much more directly with the original film than with the story or play or novel on which both of them are based (Leitch 39).

Even if all kinds of remakes seemingly seek to annihilate their sources, only remakes of literary films have found loopholes that help them eliminate their hypotexts on all levels.

### 2.1.3. The (Dis-)Illusion of Fidelity

Of all questions that emerge within the context of adaptations that of fidelity is probably the one leading to the most heated and at the same time most tiresome discussions. As harmless as the statement “It Wasn’t Like That in the Book ...” appears at first sight, it can easily set off wars of words and make waves that go far beyond academic discourses and critical reviews (McFarlane, *Book 3*). As long as it stays at comparisons between the two independent works of art no harm is done to any of them, but the very moment evaluation comes into play films normally leave the battle field as losers since “[e]xisting comparison of an adaptation with its source consisted mostly of a critical listing of failings of the latter, and rested upon an assumption that fidelity was a filmmaker’s only reasonable intention and a film’s only proper outcome” (Cardwell 52). Statements such as ‘The film has not managed to capture the spirit of the novel’ thus imply the superiority of written texts over their cinematic versions and at the same time reject the existence of screenplays on which the films are actually based. Such hostile views on films again raise the aspect of their parasitic nature and usually provoke criticism applying “terms such as *infidelity, betrayal, deformation, violation, vulgarization, and desecration*” (Stam, *Fidelity* 54).

Unfortunately the Copyright Law of the United States of America does

not express it differently when applying the term “derivative works” in the context of adaptations (§ 103). This choice of terminology immediately creates a hierarchical notion in which a hypertext is depicted as secondary to and contingent on its hypotext. Even though differentiations are established as regards the elements derived from other pre-existing works as opposed to those parts contributed by the author, the expression ‘derivative work’ is extremely pejorative and deprives all adaptations of their individualistic notion.

In the context of literary film, Stam starts an attempt to get to the bottom of this unequal relationship between film and literature by using the alleged pre-eminence of literature as a starting point. Investigating the human psyche as regards habit formation, he eventually draws the conclusion that there are three crucial aspects involved in this phenomenon:

*seniority*, the assumption that older arts are necessarily better arts; *iconophobia*, the culturally rooted prejudice [...] that visual arts are necessarily inferior to verbal arts; and *logophilia*, the converse valorization, characteristic of the ‘religions of the book,’ of the ‘sacred word’ of holy texts. (58)

The notion of literature’s superiority is marked by an anxiety of loss of prestige resulting in a reverential return to the tried and tested. In brief, film opponents perceive the successful rise of the cinematic arts as a threat to literature in various ways – e.g. culturally, socially, pedagogically to name but a few – and thus try to defend the status of the literary arts which unfortunately results in nothing more than accusations and mudslinging.

However, this dismissive attitude towards adaptation as a creative and individualist process is not only confined to the field of literature but can similarly be detected in the film scene. Even though the argument of logophilia and iconophobia can be considered pointless in this context, the aspect of seniority is immensely present at all times. Leaving aside the economic motives of remakes and turning an eye to the part of the audience familiar with the original film, it can be observed that both the content and the spirit of the remake is usually measured against the background of the original version. Discussions that result from such comparisons often employ “a common strategy: the critic treats the original and its meaning for its contemporary audience as a fixity,



against which the remake is measured and evaluated” (Eberwein 15). Thus, one may conclude that the reason for the inferior depiction of adaptations in general does not so much rest upon the aspects of logophilia and iconophobia, which still remain crucial to the discussion of literature into film, but rather depends on the superior idea of ‘being the first’. Therefore, “[f]idelity criticism depends on a notion of the text as having and rendering up to the (intelligent) reader a single, correct ‘meaning’ which the filmmaker has either adhered to or in some sense violated or tampered with” (McFarlane, *Novel* 8).

So far, the focus has more or less exclusively rested upon the original’s perspective from which the adaptation is seen as a derivational product. This definition roots in the assumption that an adaptation’s intention is the mere replication of the original. However, drawing on the example of literary film, these arguments are untenable as such because it is simply impossible to replicate a novel faithfully in the medium of film. In spite of the similarities to a novel, it would be simply wrong to regard a literary film as a sheer copy of the original and thereby restrict the film’s intention solely to the faithful translation of a literary work. As has already been mentioned elsewhere, adaptations represent nothing more than interpretations of pre-existing properties to which they certainly refer but without laying claim to originality in the sense of being the first. However, the problem is that “[literary people] are too often not interested in something new being made in the film but only in assessing how far their own conception of the novel has been transformed from one medium to the other” (McFarlane, *Book* 6). Here lies the most delicate discrepancy in looking at adaptations because these people measure their own interpretation of the novel against the adaptational outcome while at the same time overlooking the fact that the film version represents an interpretation itself.

Allowing for these considerations, there seems to be no clue in technically comparing a novel to its film version for the latter is not and will never be the book and therefore represents just one personal interpretation out of many. Hence, someone familiar with a novel who watches the film adaptation can only compare his/her own interpretation with that of the filmmakers. In the same sense Andrew points out that “[t]he broader notion of the process of adaptation has much in common with interpretation theory, for in a strong sense

adaptation is the appropriation of a meaning from a prior text” (29). These assumptions do not object to the idea that alteration happens in the context of adaptation but rather imply that change does not occur without any reason. The starting point of adaptations is always marked by some kind of pre-existing entity but the direction an adaptation process takes depends highly on the circumstances under which the film is produced as well as the adapter’s intentions and interpretations. Therefore, “the adaptation’s audience need to consider the historical context and technological constraints within which the adaptation is produced” (Whelehan 17).

If one decides, for instance, to watch *Bride and Prejudice*, one needs to accept the filmmaker’s intentions of reinterpreting the 19<sup>th</sup> century original story within a completely different temporal, spatial and cultural context. The case is similar with the 2006 psychological drama film *Notes on a Scandal* in which the protagonist’s homosexuality is made explicit whereas in Zoë Heller’s novel of the same title the reader is left in the dark about Barbara’s tendencies. The filmmaker’s decision entails drastic consequences as regards the ending of the film for the story would lose much of its realism if the ending remained the same as in the novel. As a result, Sheba can only stay with Barbara as long as their relationship remains platonic, which is definitely not the case in the film due to Barbara’s confession of her homosexuality.

In conclusion, therefore, it can be pointed out that adaptations are by no means bound to reproduce their source in a faithful way. In fact, the hypotext is only to be regarded as an impulse that sets off an adaptational process in the course of which the filmmakers transfer their own views and interpretations to the screen. Hence, “[i]f we know the adapted work, there will be constant oscillation between it and the new adaptation we are experiencing” (Hutcheon XV). However, it is important to bear in mind that the screen version to which one’s own interpretations are compared must not be mistaken for the world of the novel but in fact, needs to be regarded as an additional interpretation of it.

As to audiences, whatever their complaints about this or that violation of the original, they have continued to want to see what the books ‘look like’. Constantly creating their own mental images of the world of a novel and its people, they are interested in comparing their images with those created by the film-maker. (McFarlane, *Novel* 7)

And although adaptations have constantly been subject to scathing criticism due to their repetitive character, there is something magical in their proper nature that captivates audiences and ensures their success.

## **2.2. The Intertextual Dimension of Transtextual Relations**

### **2.2.1. Textual Fornication**

The concept of intertextuality has its origins in Julia Kristeva's continuation of Mikhail Bakhtin's "life-long insistence that all linguistic communication occurs in specific social situations and between specific classes and groups of language-users" (Allen 15). In his theory of dialogism, the Russian scholar and literary critic develops the idea that utterances do not basically exist in a vacuum but must always be seen as interrelated with what has previously been stated within a socially and politically determined textual environment.

Language, seen in its social dimension, is constantly reflecting and transforming class, institutional, national and group interests. No word or utterance, from this perspective, is ever neutral. Though the meaning of utterances may be unique, they still derive from already established patterns of meaning recognizable by the addressee and adapted by the addresser. (Allen 18)

Building upon Bakhtin's wider notion of cross-textual communication within a social setting, Kristeva takes over his ideas and applies them to her concept of intertextuality in which she similarly perceives text "as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another" (Kristeva, *Reader* 37). In her approach, she slightly moves away from Bakhtin's communicative emphasis towards a definition of texts as a patchwork of utterances. From this viewpoint, a text in its physical form cannot be regarded as unique and original but need rather be considered as a construct of already existing discourses (cf. Allen 35). From such preceding discourses various text sequences, which due to their intersection eventually neutralise each other, are absorbed and transformed into a new text (cf. Kristeva, *Desire* 36).

Other poststructuralists such as Roland Barthes then have adopted Kristeva's by taking them as a starting point in order to establish their own theories. With respect to a text's constructed character out of several pre-existing utterances, Barthes appears to approve of Kristeva's notion of intertextuality when stating:

We know now that a text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theoretical' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture. [...] [T]he writer can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original. His only power is to mix writings, to counter the ones with the others, in such a way as never to rest in any one of them. (Barthes 146)

However, Kristeva's concept is not left without criticism which at the latest surfaces in Barthes's viewpoint regarding a writer's authority. In his famous and influential essay *The Death of the Author* he points out that the writer lacks the ability to control the reader's decoding of a text for the reader conceives and interprets it within his/her own culturally and socially coloured context. Moreover, assuming that a text represents a conglomeration of the previously uttered, even the author as such has to be regarded as a reader and hence, when Barthes proclaims the death of the author, the reader automatically takes the centre stage.

This shift equally implies the notion that "the reader is not the absent mediator-translator as in Kristeva, but body of mediation or medium for the text's effect or [...] affect to come into play" (Orr 34). While Kristeva's focus thus still rests upon the doubtful notion of a perfect author-reader-relationship, Barthes objects to this idea when emphasising the absurdity of such a constellation due to the fact that all negotiation of meaning remains with the reader. By choosing such a focus, he branches out into the field of reception theory, which represents the first trend in the history of literary theory where an instance other than the author or the text is given prominence in the process of reading. From this point of view, the following aspects need to be taken into consideration: first of all, a text per se represents nothing more than the physical representation of a writer's ideas within a cultural context, its basic

function is then to be read, and finally, readers are restricted to their own experience when interpreting a text and usually have no direct access to an author's mind. Following the traces of the American critic Stanley Fish, Eagleton points out in a short survey on reception theory that

reading is not a matter of discovering what the text means, but a process of experiencing what it *does* to you. [...] What the text 'does' to us, however, is actually a matter of what we do to it, a question of interpretation; the object of critical attention is the structure of the reader's experience, not any 'objective' structure to be found in the work itself. (74)

Reception theorists generally underline the existing relationship that exists between a text and a reader's experience within a specific cultural setting on the basis of which interpretations are established. However, these interpretative suggestions on the part of the reader can differ to a large extent depending on the cultural background of the readers. Thus, readers who are members of the same cultural community normally show a strong tendency to generate similar interpretations of a text whereas those who do not draw their knowledge from the same cultural experiences usually spread into different directions in their negotiation of meaning. In terms of intertextuality, it is therefore very likely that those readers who share their cultural knowledge with an author sometimes find it easier to detect intertexts and make sense of them. However, if one assumes then that texts represent mosaics of other texts, it is utterly impossible to relate all intertexts to their sources for this implies that "[a]ny text that has slept with another text, to put it more crudely, has necessarily slept with all the texts the other text has slept with" (Stam, *Film* 202). Hence, texts in the sense of Kristeva and Barthes must not be reduced to a mere existence within one another but need to be regarded as the totality of texts that can function as intertexts so as to establish new texts that carry new meaning. Jonathan Culler seems to come to a similar conclusion when pointing out that

'Intertextuality' [...] has a double focus. On the one hand, it calls our attention to the importance of prior texts, insisting that the autonomy of texts is a misleading notion and that a work has the meaning it does only because certain things have previously been written. Yet in so far as it focuses on intelligibility, on meaning, 'intertextuality' leads us to consider

prior texts as contributions to a code which makes possible the various effects of signification. Intertextuality thus becomes less a name for a work's relation to particular prior texts than a designation of its participation in the discursive space of culture [...]. (103)

Texts are never new and original due to their fragmented construction of intertexts but when seen as a whole tend to convey new meaning and contribute to a specific cultural discourse. Moreover, the interpretation of texts remains with the readers who draw upon their own cultural knowledge so as to decode the interwoven intertexts as well as the overall meaning of the text they are part of. However, a crucial point that needs to be taken into consideration is the fact that the aforementioned conceptual ideas tend to perceive texts as the totality of the previously uttered and rather approach the phenomenon of intertextuality from the realm of cultural studies. Jonathan Culler distinguishes between two different ways of looking at intertextuality, the first of which is its cultural dimension. However, the second perspective that can serve as a starting point is the exploration of intertexts in relation to prior texts which, in spite of Culler's objections, seems to be a more functional approach when it comes to the analysis of intertextuality.

#### 2.2.2. Genette's Notion of Intertextuality

Kristeva's notion of intertextuality, as well as all the other abovementioned theories, thus represents a general description of how texts are constructed and decoded depending on the cultural context in which they are embedded. Although these concepts can be regarded as useful reflections on the nature of texts as such, they happen to be very problematic when it comes to the analysis of literature or film adaptations. According to these definitions "[f]ilm adaptations, then, are caught up in the ongoing whirl of intertextual reference and transformation, of texts generating other texts in an endless process of recycling, transformation, and transmutation, with no veritable point of origin" (Stam, *Fidelity* 66). However, if one works on the basis of such a concept, it is extremely hard to draw acceptable and valid conclusions since there is no practical aim in a notion of text as the totality of its intertexts. The important

questions here rather need to be those of why intertexts are chosen so as to establish a relationship between a prior text and a new one and what impact this choice has on the recipients.

Genette appears to have detected a similar problem within the prevailing concepts of intertextuality and has eventually used this discrepancy as an opportunity to develop his model of transtextuality in order to put textual interrelations in more concrete terms. What he has decided to call transtextuality basically corresponds to the notion of intertextuality in its broader sense as the totality of textual relations. Confusingly enough, he also applies the term intertextuality to one of his sub-categories but reduces the concept to the tangible presence of texts within other texts in the form of citations, plagiarisms and allusions.

As has already been mentioned elsewhere, Genette's transtextual relations do not exist in a vacuum but tend to overlap. This is the case, for instance, when it comes to a relationship of a hypo- and a hypertext. As the latter is based on the former, it is inevitable that apart from the hypertextual relations that exist between the two texts, intertextual elements are established as well. In the case of *Bridget Jones's Diary*, for example, a hypertextual relationship is loosely set up between the novel and the TV program *Pride and Prejudice* and the actual film itself. Within this relationship the intertextual element of the character of Mr Darcy is generated in two different ways, namely by means of citation and allusion. By introducing a character called Mr Darcy to the film, a direct reference has been established to the character in the novel. However, the allusion to the BBC series lies somewhere totally different, namely within Colin Firth, who has cinematically coined the role of Mr Darcy in the course of this program. Therefore, it can be stated that apart from their hypertextual relationship with a source text, "[f]ilm adaptations can be seen as a kind of multileveled negotiation of intertexts" (Stam, *Fidelity* 67).

#### 2.2.2.1. Citations and Plagiarisms

In his *Palimpseste* Genette basically defines citations as texts between quotation marks with more or less detailed reference given to their source texts

(cf. 10). Although films do not use quotation marks because they work on the basis of a different sign system, they also make use of the technique of citations so as to establish references to other works. In the 2006 romantic drama film *The Lake House*, for instance, the use of Jane Austen's novel *Persuasion* so as to interrelate the plots of the two works demonstrates one technique of putting emphasis on one text within another. Shortly after the first appearance of the novel on screen, the female protagonist provides the audience with a vague plot summary and later on in the film when she finds the novel again, she even reads out a passage.

A similar technique is to be found in the 1999 romantic comedy *You've Got Mail* where the female protagonist confesses her affection for Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, which in the next scene appears on screen. Although the technique of citing books is frequently applied in films, it does not always remain clear from which source texts these citations derive. Sticking to the example of *You've Got Mail*, there is another scene in the film in which Kathleen Kelly reads out a story to a couple of children that are sitting around her in a semicircle. Here the audience remains clueless about the book's title since they are only provided with a short passage from the book. Although the audience is aware that these sentences represent a direct quotation from a novel, only those who are familiar with Roald Dahl's *Boy: Tales of Childhood* can understand the reference that is established in this shot. As a result, the degree of explicitness in terms of intertextual elements constitutes a crucial factor in detecting and comprehending such references. However, if these interrelations of two texts remain rather implicit, previous knowledge and recognition is required on the part of the audience.

In contrast to citations, Genette defines plagiarism as "eine nicht deklarierte, aber immer noch wörtliche Entlehnung" which is traceable within another text (*Palimpseste* 10). Although the abovementioned citation of Roald Dahl's autobiographical book does not establish any explicit reference to its source, it immediately becomes clear that the audience is presented with a part of an already existing story when they see Kathleen Kelly holding the book in her hands. Plagiarism, on the other hand, is extraordinarily wary of giving the slightest impression of reference to another text since it pretends to be original



and is therefore particularly concerned that its cover is not blown. As has probably become clear, plagiarisms represent an act of copyright infringement and can thus lead to legal ramifications if its reference to another text is revealed.

#### 2.2.2.2. Allusions

The third type of intertextual relations is referred to as allusion, which Genette defines as “[eine] Aussage, deren volles Verständnis das Erkennen einer Beziehung zwischen ihr und einer anderen voraussetzt, auf die sich diese oder jene Wendung des Texts bezieht, der ja sonst nicht ganz verständlich wäre” (*Palimpseste* 10). In comparison to citations and plagiarisms, allusions do not replicate the original text or establish an explicit reference to it. Therefore, it seems appropriate to suggest that the novels that have been integrated into the aforementioned films need to be considered cinematic citations. However, as has already been pointed out in the case of *Bridget Jones’s Diary*, citations rather tend to remain at the surface level of a work but can trigger assumptions that go far beyond the images that an audience is presented with on screen. “Like any signifier, allusion is not self-referential as it points beyond itself. However, allusion does not disperse or defer meanings either. Like quotation, it intensifies meaningfulness, but extensively rather than intensively” (Orr 139). While the name of Mr Darcy represents a citation, all other aspects need to be referred to as allusions, including Colin Firth’s role as well as the similarities between the novel and the film as regards content.

Nevertheless, one may conclude that the films mentioned above have one aspect in common for they all refer or allude to Jane Austen novels on which neither of them is overtly based. *The Lake House* openly announces its relation to the South Korean film *Il Mare*, *You’ve Got Mail* turns out to be a remake of *The Shop Around the Corner* and *Bridget Jones’s Diary* is based on a novel of the same title by Helen Fielding. Above all in connection with the first two films in which the novel repeatedly turns up by means of cinematic citation, the question suggests itself whether they simply need to be considered as texts within texts or whether these intertextual elements can be regarded as allusions

to the novels' content. It has already been stated that a remake can at the same time take the function of a literary adaptation if it is based on the same property as a previous film. However, is such a phenomenon also possible if neither of the films is based on a novel? Can strong intertextual references turn a remake into a literary film even though it refers to itself as nothing but a remake?

### **2.3. Narration in Novel and Film**

First of all, it needs to be taken into consideration that the narrating/discourse time of a film is much more limited than that of a novel. Since most films are of a length – i.e. narrating time in this case – that is between 90 and 150 minutes, the original story of a novel has to be cut down in order to select the most crucial elements. According to Manfred Jahn, who has published a short reader which is called *A Guide to Narratological Film Analysis*, this selection of relevant elements responds to what is known as the 'co-operative principle' by Grice (cf. *Film* 4.1.1.). As nobody would be willing to watch a film which lasts five hours or even longer, it is indispensable to summarise the most relevant elements of the original story, if based on a novel, in order to keep the action running and the viewer interested. Consequently, the narrating time of films is largely reduced to only a small proportion of its original length, i.e. that of the novel. In this context, James Monaco points out: "Handlungsdetails gehen fast regelmäßig bei der Übertragung vom Buch in den Film verloren" (45).

#### **2.3.1. The Nature of Narrative**

##### **2.3.1.1. Showing versus Telling**

The most basic conception of narrative has been derived from Plato's and Aristotle's conception of 'mimesis' and 'diegesis' and has manifested itself within the more commonly applied distinction of 'showing' and 'telling'. In *Coming to Terms* Seymour Chatman, for instance, adopts these concepts in order to distinguish between diegetic narrative genres, such as epic narratives, novels and short stories, as opposed to mimetic narrative genres, such as

plays, films or cartoons (cf. 115). However, Genette objects to this distinction when stating that narratives equally comprise both mimetic and diegetic aspects but opts for a change in terminology and eventually suggests the terms “narrative of events” and “narrative of words” (*Revisited* 43).

Even if these two approaches appear to be highly incongruous at first sight, they still share a crucial aspect that lies within the coexistence of words and images within narratives. However, it needs to be pointed out that while Chatman’s approach remains rather general, Genette positions himself within the realm of literary studies and thus tackles the problem from a completely different point of view. The former applies the concept of ‘mimesis’ and ‘diegesis’ in order to establish a distinction between literary as well as dramatic and cinematic works of art by stressing their different semiotic systems, i.e. the different media in which narratives are established. In contrast, it needs to be taken into consideration that Genette does not approach this phenomenon from the outside, like Chatman does, but rather seeks to join these two aspects within the narrative itself. From his point of view, ‘narrative of words’ and ‘narrative of events’ therefore constitute two aspects that are present within all narratives.

Although both theorists have a point in their argumentation, Chatman raises a crucial aspect when stressing the difference between print and performance media in terms of narrative techniques since it is generally agreed on that novels and films work on the basis of different sign systems. While the former establishes a narrative merely with the help of written language and seeks to create images in the reader’s mind, the latter makes recourse to a variety of different sign systems that are channelled differently.

Das heißt, der Film ist, wie auch das Theater, ein *audio-visuelles* Medium. Er verbindet eine Vielzahl von Zeichensystemen, wie sie der literarische Text nicht aufweist, nämlich die gesprochene und geschriebene Sprache, das Geräusch, die Musik und vor allem die Zeichensysteme, welche durch den Bildtrakt transportiert werden (Gestik, Mimik, Requisitensymbolik usw.). (Kuchenbuch 90)

In addition, film and all other forms of performance media, such as plays and computer games, combine the use of different senses at the same time so as to

bring across the story as authentically as possible. Thus, the audience often simultaneously have to deal with information reaching them via two channels, namely that of images and that of sounds, whereas sounds can be further sub-categorised into noise, speech and music (cf. Jahn, *Film* 3.2.). Images or shots, as they are called in narratological film analysis, can provide the audience with as much information about the characters, the situation they find themselves in, the setting, etc. as, for instance, the narrator can in a different way. The viewer's position then shifts from that of the listener or reader to that of the observer.

However, “[w]hen theorists talk of adaptation from print to performance media, the emphasis is usually on the visual, on the move from imagination to actual ocular perception. But the aural is just as important as the visual to this move” (Hutcheon 40). Therefore, prominence must also be given to the spoken word as well as to film music. The latter often forms an important means with the help of which it becomes possible to push the action forward or to make the inner world of the characters perceptible for the audience. One may conclude that since it is not common practice of motion pictures to make use of narrators in the same way as novels do, they hence need to compensate this lack by applying other techniques such as visual colouring as well as music, spoken language and voice-overs.

In order to return to Genette's ideas, it seems reasonable to assume that the aspects of 'narrative of words' and 'narrative of events' are detectable in all kinds of narratives and therefore also within those that exist outside the discipline of literary studies. Bordwell and Thompson provide the following basic definition of narrative:

[w]e can consider a *narrative* to be a *chain of events in cause-effect relationship occurring in time and space*. [...] Typically, a narrative begins with one situation; a series of changes occurs according to a pattern of cause and effect; finally a new situation arises that brings about the end of the narrative. Our engagement with the story depends on our understanding of the pattern of change and stability, cause and effect, time and space. (75)

Hence, the most central aspect of narratives probably lies within the establishment of a plausible cause-effect relationship so as to facilitate

comprehension and allow the readers or the audience to connect the events temporally and spatially. The manner in which such causalities are established and presented to a recipient is usually characterised by both narrative forms as provided by Genette. Moreover, when proceeding to the more general level at which Chatman's approach is positioned one must not be oblivious of the fact that the representational techniques of such narratives can show strong variations from one medium to the other.

### 2.3.1.2. Components of Narratives

As has already been discussed in the context of adaptations, narratives always represent a form of communication between different narrative instances. Chatman, for instance, suggests a distinction between two and/or three different communicative levels including the instances of the real author and the real reader as opposed to the implied author and the implied reader. An additional communicative situation can be established between a narrator and a narratee who, according to Chatman, can also happen to be absent. (cf. *Structure* 147ff.) However, there are some difficulties that turn up in connection with this concept due to the fact that the author and the reader, no matter if real or implied, exist outside the actual narrative world in which major communicative efforts also happen to occur. However, this absent emphasis on the world of characters leads to the erroneous assumption that communication only exists outside the narrative. Taking this into consideration, Manfred Jahn presents three different levels of narrative communication which are embedded within one another:

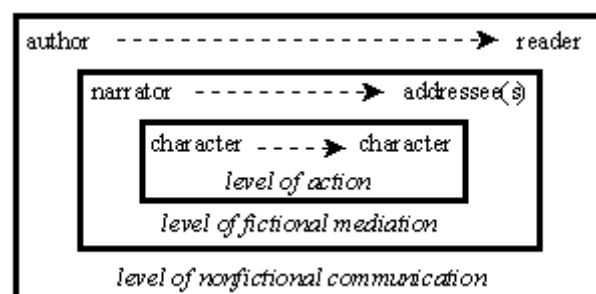


Fig. 2 – *Narrative Communication*  
(Jahn, *Narratology* 2.3.1.)

As can be seen in the figure above, narrative communication occurs between binary instances at three different levels. However, given the fact that this

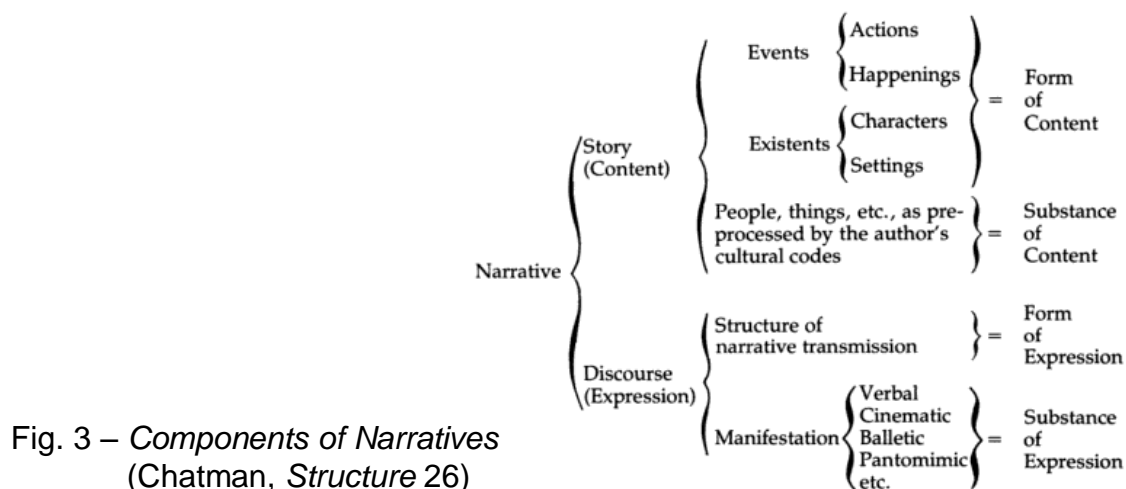
constellation needs to be regarded as fixed, it is impossible for a narrative instance to swap levels so as to establish a communicative situation with an instance of the level above or below. Thus, the author addresses the reader at the nonfictional level whereas the narrator communicates with one or more addressees at the level of fictional mediation. The level of action eventually refers to the world of characters which has been widely neglected in the concept of Chatman. In relation to Genette's distinction of 'narrative of events' and 'narrative of words', it can even be suggested that the former is established at the level of fictional mediation whereas the latter is more likely to emerge at the level of action.

Apart from these communicative aspects of narratives, another important terminological distinction needs to be taken into consideration which has come to be referred to as the difference between 'text', 'story' and 'plot'. "Whereas 'story' is a succession of events, 'text' is a spoken or written discourse which undertakes their telling. Put more simply the text is what we read" (Rimmon-Kenan 3). Moreover, plot can be defined as story plus cause by providing the underlying connections between the different events included in the story. Drawing upon the example of crime narratives, the revelation of the murderer is more often than not delayed until the end of the narrative in order to create suspense. The story starts with the murder or even earlier with the underlying motive and the preparations of the crime and tells the chronological sequence of events up to the point where the crime is solved. In contrast, the plot comprises the events in exactly the same order as they are presented on screen.

[Therefore, t]he story-plot distinction suggests that if you want to give someone a synopsis of a narrative film, you can do it in two ways. You summarize the story, starting from the very earliest incident that the plot cues you to assume or infer and running straight through to the end. Or you can tell the plot, starting with the first incident you encountered in watching the film. (Bordwell and Thompson 77)

However, in literary and film theory the concept of 'story' is not only characterised by its opposition to plot but can equally be defined in contrast to 'discourse'. Within this distinction, 'story' is referred to as what is narrated, i.e.

content, whereas discourse focuses on how the story is narrated, i.e. expression. While most theorists leave it at that, Chatman proceeds to develop his own notion of narrative components adding to the dimension of 'form' a second category which he terms 'substance'.



In the context of this more detailed description of narrative components, the aspects of 'story' and 'plot' as described by Bordwell and Thompson have become sub-categories of the larger dimensions of 'story' and 'discourse'. In Chatman's model the category of events then summarises the overall sequence of actions whereas the structure of narrative transmission includes aspects such as focalisation. However, a crucial diversification that has been made within this concept is the manifestation of narratives, i.e. the consideration of the fact that narratives represent phenomena across media. As a result, it can be stated that the lowest common denominator of films and novels can be found within the fact that both media work on the basis of narratives.

Narratives are not restricted to one medium but can be considered phenomena across media of which films and novels only represent two specific examples. Hence, it seems to be reasonable to assume that the major differences between novels and films can be detected in their substance of expression, i.e. at the level of discourse, since they employ different sign systems in order to present a narrative. The most conspicuous variation probably is that the medium of film usually does not have a narrator at its disposal and therefore needs to compensate this absence at the level of fictional mediation by other means available, such as camera positioning as well as

voice-overs and music. Besides, when establishing a connection between Chatman's model and adaptations, one may conclude that "narrative is a meaningful structure in its own right" (Chatman, *Structure* 24). Therefore, it can be suggested that a hypotext and a hypertext constitute two different narratives that may show overlaps as well as variations in their structure.

### 2.3.2. Voice and Focalisation

In his model of narrative discourse Gérard Genette stresses the importance of differentiating between the two questions of who speaks and who perceives within a narrative. As regards terminology, he has come to refer to this phenomenon as the distinction between 'voice' and 'mood'/ 'focalisation' (cf. *Narrative* 186). The category of 'voice' focuses on the narrator's degree of covertness within a narrative text and usually distinguishes between overt and covert narrators. (cf. Jahn, *Narratology* 3.1.4.). An overt narrator can be described as having a distinctive voice which s/he makes use of in order to address the reader directly or indirectly offering explanations or comments. In contrast, a covert narrator is characterised by mere reporting in a neutral voice. Moreover, narrators can further be qualified with respect to their presence or absence within a narrative: while heterodiegetic narrators are not present as characters in the story, homodiegetic narrators usually are. Autodiegetic narrators represent a special case of homodiegetic narration where the narrator is at the same time the protagonist of the story (cf. Genette, *Narrative* 245ff.). Another useful distinction has been made by Rimmon-Kenan, who among other aspects refers to narrators in terms of their reliability: "[a] reliable narrator is one whose rendering of the story and commentary on it the reader is supposed to take as an authoritative account of the fictional truth. An unreliable narrator, on the other hand, is one whose rendering of the story and/or commentary on it the reader has reasons to suspect" (101).

Even though 'focalisation' is strongly linked to the instance of the narrator, it rather serves as a tool for the analysis of narrative perspectives and the direction into which a narrative is steered by a focaliser's point of view. Genette provides three main distinctions of how a focaliser's perspective can



direct the narrative text. 'Zero focalisation' is per definition nonfocalized since the focaliser's perspective is not restricted to a specific point of view but appears to be omniscient giving a "vision from behind" (*Revisited* 65). In contrast, the techniques of 'internal' and 'external focalisation' do not remain nonfocalised but establish certain perspectives that orient the narrative. As regards 'internal' focalisation, the perspective is located within a character, and thus limited to what this character thinks, feels and perceives. Within this category, Genette continues in distinguishing between 'fixed focalisation', where the narrative is presented from the point of view of a single character, 'variable focalisation', in which different passages of the story are presented through different focalisers, and 'multiple focalisation', where an episode is presented several times from the perspective of different focalisers (cf. *Narrative* 189f.). In 'external focalisation', on the other hand, the perspective is located outside the characters and the aspects narrated are observable from the outside, e.g. what characters say and do (cf. *Revisited* 56f.).

In connection with film, it can be pointed out that the narrator constitutes a highly problematic aspect since the film works on the basis of a different semiotic system. While in literature the reader is usually led through a story by a narrator, the framework conditions are completely different in film art due to the fact that narration is no longer engendered by means of words but in the form of pictures. Therefore, it can be suggested that film basically narrates a story by showing it and Bordwell even goes so far as to suggest that there is no such instance as a narrator in films since "in watching films, we are seldom aware of being told something by an entity resembling a human being. [...] [N]arration is better understood as the organisation of a set of cues for the construction of a story" (62). Although Bordwell has a point in stating that the function of the narrator has largely been replaced by visual narration, he seems to forget that film has other techniques at its disposal to establish narrative voice. Jahn, for instance, stresses the assumption that "filmic narrators [can] come in two kinds depending on whether they are visible on-screen or not. Both are speaking parts but only the on-screen narrator is a speaking as well as an acting part" (*Film* 4.2.1.). Thus, voice-overs need to be considered as a narrative device whose function can be similar to that of homodiegetic or heterodiegetic

narrators in literature. However, it cannot be denied that external focalisation, i.e. the presentation of images, remains the predominant technique of film narration which gives rise to another problem, namely to that of objectivity manifested.

When presenting a narrative in the form of images instead of telling it by means of a narrator, the influence on the audience seems to vanish because “film events manifest themselves as definite” (Lothe 85). This is mainly due to the fact that the representational characteristics of images make the act of imagining a scene superfluous. One of the most objectifying cinematic devices is occasionally referred to as the invisible or hypothetical observer who is in fact the camera viewing a scene from a neutral position (cf. Bordwell 9f. and Jahn, *Film* 4.3.6.). The hypothetical observer does not exist in literary texts for obvious reasons. “In a play or a film, all this [is] shown directly. In narrative fiction, it has to be said in language, and the language is that of the narrator” (Rimmon-Kenan 98). However, if films were ever so neutral, they would never manage to becharm their audiences since there is no pleasure one can take in watching an entirely neutral sequence of images. Therefore, the narrator of literary texts has largely been replaced by other devices which are inherent in film.

Images are not always presented in an objective way since the camera can take the position of characters so as to deliver their point of view, e.g. by means of over-the-shoulder shots. Thus, film “inevitably transforms narrative point of view. Since photographic medium represents exterior states, film can only suggest interior states through subjective point-of-view shots, visually rendering the protagonist’s perceptions” (Ferriss 123). If the audience had no access at all to the characters’ thoughts, perceptions and emotions, identification would be impossible and cinema visits would become tedious and absurd. While it is common practice in novels that the narrator describes the feelings of characters, in film they become observable in the faces and reactions of the actors and actresses. Only when it comes to internal focalisation, i.e. the representation of the inner world of a character, voice-overs are usually indispensable.

An equally important narrative device lies in film music whose basic function is to support the visual narrative presented on screen. Apart from

images, it probably constitutes the most powerful technique that is available in film production in order to orient and affect the audience. In their book *Film Art* Bordwell and Thompson, for example, also stress the aspect of sounds in the context of film suggesting several reasons for its powers. “[S]ound can actively shape how we perceive and interpret the image [...] [and it] can direct our attention quite specifically within the image” (265). Moreover, “[i]t cues us to form expectations and gives a new value to silence” (265). What all these aspects have in common is that they actively contribute to the manipulation of the audience in some form or another which in literary narratives is one of the functions of the narrator.

It has been shown that the role of the literary narrator has entirely been reduced to the use of voice-overs since literary description has been replaced by cinematic representation. As films present narratives by means of images, the audience is provided with an external perspective that makes them perceive the story as more objective but at the same time hampers internal focalisation. Film has thus generated other practices so as to make internal aspects explicit and grant insight into the inner world of the characters. Hence, it seems reasonable to suggest that both novels and films narrate by applying different strategies that strongly depend on the very different nature of the two media.

### 3. Re-Adapting Jane Austen

No matter if in the form of a Romantic novel or a Hollywood film, Jane Austen's stories have proved to be ageless classics that resist all signs of time. As described by Linda Troost and Sayre Greenfield, the reasons for the novelist's success, even in modern times, are quite simple and comprehensible:

The qualities that make Austen's novels appealing material for the large and small screen include values that, if not immutable, have been continually appreciated over the last two hundred years. Austen's characters strike a perfect balance between recognizable types and individuals with complex motivations and idiosyncratic personalities. Readers and watchers identify with them and yet cannot fully predict their behaviours. [...] The concerns at the center of Austen's plots –sex, romance, and money—are central concerns in our own era. The details of developing love and the constraints of limited finances provide difficulties that lend her storylines interest for the 1990s reader of sufficient maturity [...]. (3f.)

The 20<sup>th</sup> century has been marked by an abundance of classic novel adaptations that often vary tremendously in their presentation of the original story ranging from literal translations to highly individual interpretations that are frequently marked by contextual alterations. However, for a very long time “[a]n important part of this construction of Austen has been the peculiarly insistent discourse of fidelity that has accompanied adaptations of her work” (North 38). Therefore, loose adaptations of Austen's novels represent a rather new and contemporary phenomenon which roots in the 1990s with films like *Clueless* (1995) and has not ceased to continue in the new millennium as one discovers in *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001) and *Bride and Prejudice* (2004). The increasing tendency towards radical translations in the course of the last two decades certainly indicates a shift towards an era of postclassical adaptations which can partly be attributed to the decline of the concept of fidelity giving way to a more individualistic style of adapting.

However, one analytical discrepancy as concerns such radical translation often lies within their reception as adaptations. The farther a hypertext distances itself from its hypotext, the more difficult the audience will find it to establish connections between the two texts. As this is the basic objective of radical

translations, one may conclude that they have finally arrived at a point where fidelity is of infinitesimal importance. However, when it comes to the analysis of such forms of adaptation, the critics, on their continuous quest for intertextual references, become comparable to archaeologists. This is, above all, the case when classic stories are not only translated into a new context but merge with other narratives in order to create something completely new. This has happened, for instance, in the context of Alejandro Agresti's *The Lake House* as well as Nora Ephron's *You've Got Mail* where two Jane Austen novels have been embedded into already existing stories triggering a merging process which eventually leads to a new way of looking at both narratives.

### 3.1. *Persuasion*, *The Lake House* and *Il Mare*

#### 3.1.1. *Il Mare* and *The Lake House*

Since *The Lake House* openly announces its status as an adaptation of *Il Mare*, it is clear that a variety of similarities must be detectable when it comes to a comparison of the two films. Both cinematic versions of the story basically evolve around a notion of love being strong enough to overcome time. This underlying notion is already expressed on the cover of the German DVD version of *The Lake House* where below the heads of the chief characters, Sandra Bullock and Keanu Reeves, the question is raised as to whether or not their love can transcend place and time. However, although the paratext considers spatial distance an aspect that keeps the lovers apart, it seems more appropriate to suggest that time represents the only pivotal factor of separation. Both characters either inhabit the house or live in a nearby city, which does not leave much possibility for any assumption of place being a determining impediment to their relationship.

	<i>Il Mare</i>	<i>The Lake House</i>
<b>Opening credits</b>	-	"based on the motion picture 'Il Mare'" ( <i>TLH</i> 00:03:07)
<b>Protagonists</b>	Eun-joo Kim Sung-hyun Han	Kate Forster Alex Wyler

<b>Professions</b>	voice actress architectural student / architect	doctor architectural student / architect
<b>Family relations</b>	Eun-joo's mother Sung-hyun's father and brother	Kate's mother Alex's father and brother
<b>Temporal links</b>	post box dog	post box dog
<b>Intertextual devices</b>	cassette recorder	Austen's <i>Persuasion</i> the restaurant 'Il Mare'

Fig. 4 – Most basic similarities of and differences between *IM* and *TLH*

#### 3.1.1.1. Film Plots

The story of both films centres on an amorous relationship that develops from a time-transcending correspondence between two people and as temporal distance of such a kind is hard to overcome, difficulties and misunderstandings are predetermined. In the very first scene of the film the female character moves out of the lake house leaving a message for the new tenant who eventually replies. In the course of their correspondence via a letter box in front of the house, the protagonists awaken to the fact that they live at two different points in time being separated by a time gap of exactly two years. The audience is made aware of this temporal distance even before the characters themselves realise the scope of their correspondence, which is cinematically realised by a fragmentation of the two narratives leading to frequent twists.

Right after Kate Forster has moved out of the lake house and deposited the letter in the post box, the audience sees her car passing a junction with a forest in the background. A second later, after Kate's car has just disappeared in the right bottom corner of the screen, the image changes and the trees are suddenly covered with snow; a blue car appears from the left, turns left at the junction and drives on towards the lake house. Although the audience does not know the exact circumstances until the characters discover that they live two years apart, Alex in 2004 and Kate in 2006, it becomes clear in the very first scene of the film that time is an important issue. Having accepted the time distance that lies between them, Alex and Kate get to know each other via the letters, take a stroll together through Chicago and seemingly start to develop feelings for each other. In one letter she asks him if he could retrieve a copy of

*Persuasion* that she had been given as a present by her father but which she forgot at a train station two years ago. The moment at the platform represents the first time Alex meets Kate finding her in the arms of Morgan, who is her boyfriend at that time. After Kate and Morgan have made their farewells, Alex gets the novel but it is too late since the train is already leaving. He instantly writes a letter to Kate in 2006 promising her to keep the book and return it to her at some other point in the future.

Their second encounter in 2004 is the result of a series of strange happenstances which are triggered by a dog called Jack that seemingly plays an important role in this space-time continuum. Jack is present at both levels and appears to remain unaffected by the time distance that lies between the protagonists. Although it cannot be in two places at the same time, it gives the impression of being aware of the two intertwining time levels. Its intention of bringing Alex and Kate together first becomes perceptible when all of a sudden it sprints off apparently certain of Alex's reaction to follow it. He recovers the dog sitting in front of a house which turns out to be that of Morgan, who eventually invites Alex to a surprise party for Kate's birthday that he intends to throw the same evening. Alex is a stranger to Kate in 2004 for obvious reasons since she cannot know about their future encounter but at the party he manages to get talking to her and engrosses her in a conversation about *Persuasion*, of which she gives the following plot summary:

It's about [...] waiting. These two people, they [...] meet. They almost fall in love, but the timing isn't right. They [...] have to part and then years later they [...] meet again and they get another chance. You know, but they don't know if too much time has passed. If they waited too long, if it's, you know, too late to make it work. (TLH 00:50:04 – 00:50:40)

After some insignificant small talk, Alex asks Kate for a dance and they finally kiss each other without taking any notice when Morgan and Alex's girlfriend turn up behind them literally catching them in the act. This remains the first and the last conscious encounter of the two until the end of the film although there is one point when they actually decide to meet at a restaurant called 'Il Mare'.

This decision does not pose much of a problem for Kate since the date is arranged to take place on the following day in 2006 but for Alex this implies a

waiting time of two years. Kate arrives first at the restaurant, is accompanied to their table and looks forward in delight to their meeting which makes the fact that Alex does not turn up even worse for her. She realises that she has “let [herself] got lost [...] in this beautiful phantasy where time stood still” and that she now needs to recover her own life without him (*TLH* 01:11:46 – 01:11:53). This scene marks a crucial point in the course of the film where all magic fades and gives way to more or less pure realism, implying that even if one accepts the existence of such temporal anomalies, it is highly unrealistic to assume that 2004 Alex and 2006 Kate can come together.

Back home Kate breaks up with Alex in a letter and jumps into what she considers reality by getting in touch with her former boyfriend Morgan with whom she starts a relationship again. This newly acquired conception of reality remains only intact until the last scene and is eventually shattered when Kate and Morgan hire an architect to renovate the flat which they have purchased together. At the architect's office, Kate's attention is drawn to a drawing on the wall showing the lake house. She discovers that the architect is Alex's brother and that Alex died in a car accident in Daley Plaza exactly two years ago on Valentine's Day. She starts to grasp the overall dimension of their relationship and realises that, in one of her letters on Valentine's Day 2006, she told Alex about the afternoon she had spent with her mother at Daley Plaza. In this scene at the very beginning of the film, they witness an accident where a man is overrun by a bus and finally dies in Kate's arms. After realising that this is the missing link, she drives to the lake house to warn Alex not to go to Daley Plaza that day but instead wait another two years so as to meet her at the lake house. In the end, a car approaches the post box, Alex steps out of the car and they have finally managed to transcend time in order to be together.

As the *The Lake House* openly announces its status as a remake of *Il Mare*, it is not surprising that the way the original introduces and calls attention to the different time levels of the story is quite similar in comparison to the remake. In *Il Mare* the female protagonist Eun-joo abandons the house by the sea called 'Il Mare' leaving a Christmas card for the new tenant in the post box. As soon as the van drives off, the camera zooms in on the post box until its front occupies the entire screen. In the next shot, the post box is positioned at



the centre with the sky in the background and the clouds moving uncommonly fast. Moreover, the atmosphere changes with the light slightly fading and nuances of rose being added to the blue of the sky and white of the clouds. By means of a fade-in the viewer is given the impression of a new day breaking, when the house is shown again but this time a man steps out of the front door.

Thus, the basic narrative structure that the films share is the following: two people living at two different times communicate with each other through a letter box which functions as a time portal. They feel attracted to each other and at some point they decide to meet. However, the male protagonist does not turn up, which exacerbates the already highly melancholic state of mind of the female character and intensifies the feeling of solitude inside of her. Regardless of what may have happened, she abandons the idea of their get-together and seeks to recover her life concentrating on the here and now. Finally, when the female protagonist learns that he could not make it to their date because he had already been dead at that time, she drives out to the house in order to save his life. Although the story in *The Lake House* basically remains faithful to that in *// Mare*, differences can easily be detected, of which the ending is probably the most obvious one. Apart from such structural differences, shifts in the characters' qualities as well as more subtle changes regarding the progress of the story are perceptible. In addition, the strong emphasis that rests upon the intertextual element of *Persuasion* leads one to assume that the constantly reoccurring novel has a much greater impact on *The Lake House* than one may suspect at first glance.

#### 3.1.1.2. Narrative Differences

The most palpable disparities between the two films lie in their cultural backgrounds as well as in their structural development, the latter leading to slight differences as regards their endings. As has already been mentioned elsewhere, *// Mare* is a South Korean production and although it is not explicitly pointed out, it seems appropriate to assume that the story is also set somewhere in this region. Moreover, the characters' ethnic origin in *// Mare* is highly conducive to this suggestion since both actors are native South Koreans.

In spite of the different cultural backgrounds into which the two films are embedded and which become manifest in the characters' appearance and occasionally in their environment, no major structural alteration is traceable that could be affiliated to the change of setting and the U.S. American context within *The Lake House*.

However, an aspect that highly contributes to a change of the narrative structure in *The Lake House* once more roots in its playfulness with time. As can be seen in figures five and six, the two films conspicuously diverge in terms of story-time, i.e. "the duration of the purported events of a narrative" (Chatman, *Structure* 62).

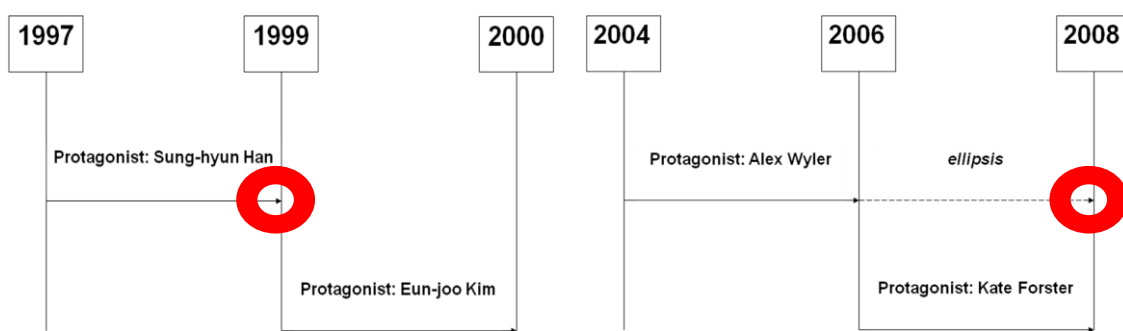


Fig. 5 – Story-time: *IM*

Fig. 6 – Story-time: *TLH*

The overall time span in *Il Mare* comprises approximately three years whereas another year has been added to the story-time in *The Lake House*. However, this does not make much of a difference as the story per se is not affected in the least by this extension. In fact, it is very likely that the choice of stretching the story-time in *The Lake House* simply aims at rendering the narrative structure of the film more symmetric. A plausible explanation of the extension of story-time may relate to the fact that Valentine's Day remains constantly prominent in *The Lake House* due to a stronger emphasis that is put on the aspect of love. When in the final scene of the film the audience finds out about the true identity of the man who dies on Valentine's Day in the beginning, the causal connections of the various elements of the story are made visible and the choice of adding another year to the story-time becomes more comprehensible.

Although these preceding reflections certainly deliver a valid outcome, it

is undeniable that they only deal with the question of structural change at a surface level. The element of Valentine's Day must rather be regarded and dealt with as an apparent metaphor for love since this is what the basic meaning of the day suggests. However, a more influential aspect that goes beyond Valentine's Day as a stylistic device is traceable at the micro-levels of the narrative representing the entangled heart of the *The Lake House* story. Although the narrative levels in *// Mare* are equally intertwined, they are more straightforward and do not interfere except for the correspondence through the letter box. Even though Sung-hyun once encounters Eun-joo at the underground station when retrieving her cassette recorder, they never get talking to each other. Moreover, the male protagonist's death is at no point anticipated in the film and is only shown in retrospect from Eun-joo's perspective at the end. The narrative structure of *// Mare* thus needs to be described as including two separate stories at two different time levels that never merge since the male protagonist does not join the Eun-joo he has written all the letters with but instead chooses to tell the whole story to her at his own time level.

Therefore, it can be stated that one major structural variation of the films lies in the fact that in *// Mare* the narrative levels do not merge since Sung-hyun meets Eun-joo in 1999, which represents at the same time the beginning and the end of the film. This technique is quite similar to that used in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, where at the end of act V Prospero promises Alfonso to deliver the story of his life (cf. 5.1.12 – 14). Such recursive narrative techniques take the story back to its beginning, which definitely holds true in the case of *// Mare*. In the last scene, the audience is once more shown Eun-joo sitting in the house by the sea writing her letter to the new tenant, a shot that is identical with another one at the very beginning of the film. As a result, one may conclude that the narrative levels in *// Mare* remain separate as the first shot must be regarded as being part of Eun-joo's narrative level whereas the last refers to Sung-hyun's story.

In contrast, the story in *The Lake House* develops in a completely different way and although Alex and Kate consciously meet in 2004, a different technique has been chosen in order to find a solution for the temporal

complications. As can be seen in figure 6, the narrative in *The Lake House* is not recurring because here the two stories eventually coincide, which is made possible by an ellipsis, i.e. an omission “where zero textual space corresponds to some story duration” (Rimmon-Kenan 53). The part of the story that covers the time span from 2004 to 2006 represents the narrative level at which Alex functions as protagonist. Accordingly, the main character of the story that is established within the time frame of 2006 until 2008 is Kate whereas the story-time that covers the same period at Alex’s level is omitted but must still be taken into consideration when it comes to an analysis of overall story-time. As a consequence, the audience is then confronted with two narratives at two different time levels but as Alex waits for two years and finally turns up at the lake house both protagonists have managed to overcome time and find themselves being together on Valentine’s Day 2008.

In comparison to *Il Mare*, the story in *The Lake House* is definitely less straightforward and far more complex in the quality of its structure due to frequent overlaps of the narrative levels. As opposed to the original, the remake does at no point apply conventional flashbacks but uses a more subtle way of establishing relations between the two levels. Alex’s death, for instance, is one of the first incidents at Kate’s narrative level which makes a flashback at the end of the film superfluous. Approaching this event from Alex’s level, it can be stated that his death is anticipated in the form of a flash-forward but since this incident occurs at Kate’s level it must be dealt with as one element of a chronological sequence of narrative events. The same holds true for all other temporal jumps which become more or less redundant due to Alex’s presence in Kate’s past. Soon after Alex has been invited to Kate’s birthday party at his level, the audience is presented with a conversation between Kate and one of her colleagues at her level. Kate talks about a man she has met recently and in the course of her commenting their rather unorthodox relationship apparently recalls an experience at her birthday party two years ago. In a next shot, the audience returns to Alex’s level where this party actually takes place, which technically turns Kate’s retrospection again into an element that forms part of a chronological sequence at Alex’s level.

To put it in a nutshell, the fragmented and highly complex structure of

*The Lake House* depends on two crucial aspects that differ from the original film, the first one being the fact that the audience is presented with the death of the male protagonist at the beginning of the film. The second crucial choice triggering alteration is the different ending in which the story does not reoccur but which has the two narrative levels coincide. This intention can only be successful if the story-time of Kate's level is also extended to a period of two years since otherwise they would not get the chance to meet the way they do.

### 3.1.2. *Persuasion* and *The Lake House*

In the course of its action *The Lake House* develops its own dynamics when altering, fortifying or re-functioning elements borrowed from *Il Mare*. Apart from the structural differences, love is given more prominence in the remake. Not only does this find expression in the steady presence of Valentine's Day but it is also perceptible in the protagonists' relationship. Although Sung-hyun and Eun-joo certainly feel attracted to each other, the quality of their connection generally remains amicable whereas in *The Lake House* it soon becomes clear that the characters' desire goes beyond a platonic connection. If there were enough readiness for friendship on Kate's part, she would definitely not break ties with Alex after the emotional disaster at 'Il Mare'.

Moreover, the intertextual element of the cassette recorder has been replaced by *Persuasion*, which represents a far more meaningful and equally more powerful signifier than an electronic device, which does not carry any additional meaning of its own. The frequent reoccurrence of the novel and Alex's comparison of their relationship to that of Anne Elliot and Captain Wentworth reinforces the assumption that in the given case *Persuasion* does not function as just any intertextual element but alludes to the similarity of the two narratives. "Sometimes variations in 'perspective' are [...] used to justify the need for a repetition: the event may be the same, but each actor views it in his or her own way" (Bal 78). During the first part of the film, the role of *Persuasion* remains rather neutral and is restricted to a superficial plot-summary. However, right after the incident at the restaurant an abrupt change is perceptible with Alex's attempt to persuade Kate not give him up, comparing their situation to

that of the lovers in the novel (cf. *TLH* 01:10:54 – 01:11:03). The necessity of re-presenting the audience with the novel most probably roots in the intention to interlink the basic story of *Il Mare* with elements of *Persuasion* so as to establish a new story.

#### 3.1.2.1. Plot of the Novel

The novel opens with Sir Walter Elliot reading in his precious Baronetage and the narrator giving the reader a survey of the family relations. The audience learns about the excellent origin of the Elliot family but must soon discover that the highly respected baron has lived beyond his means and has no money left. When Lady Elliot died, she left him with three daughters called Elizabeth, Anne and Mary. Anne Elliot is the heroine, who is marked by life and from her father's point of view not very interesting as a daughter. While Mary married young and Elisabeth is concerned with her duties and appearance, Anne had once found her great love but gave it up again on the advice of her dear friend and god-mother Lady Russell. She "persuaded [Anne] to believe the engagement a wrong thing: indiscreet, improper, hardly capable of success, and not deserving it" (26).

Eight years later, Anne Elliot's and Frederick Wentworth's paths cross again when his sister Mrs Croft and her husband Admiral Croft move in at the Elliot's family estate Kellynch Hall which Sir Walter has been advised to let due to his miserable financial situation. So the Elliots move to Bath but before Anne joins them, she visits her sister Mary at Uppercross Cottage and keeps her company for a couple of weeks. Captain Wentworth makes friends with Mr Musgrove, Mary's husband, and also spends much time at Uppercross. However, Anne draws the conclusion from Wentworth's behaviour towards her that their love is lost for good and all and is convinced of his feelings for Louis Musgrove, Mary's sister-in-law.

Following Wentworth's suggestion to go on a trip, they spend a couple of days at Lyme, where his friends the Harvilles live. During a stroll on the beach Anne establishes eye contact with an attractive man who later turns out to be her cousin Mr Elliot, heir to Kellynch Hall. Due to an unfortunate coincidence,

Louisa Musgrove falls, passes out and although the doctor is certain that she will recover, has to stay at Lyme for longer than actually planned. Anne nurses her for some time but eventually returns to Uppercross in order to help the Musgrove family with their children. After approximately two months at Uppercross she decides to leave, spends some time at Lady Russell's and together they leave for Bath to join Sir Walter and Elizabeth.

In Bath, Anne finally gets to know her cousin, to whom she is formally introduced. At first she does not find a satisfactory explanation for Mr Elliot's visit to her father but she must soon discover that he wants to make her his wife, a plan that she is not all too adverse to. However, from her dear friend Mrs Smith, whom she has known since school she learns that Mr Elliot is not the honourable and reputable man he pretends to be. He only desires a relationship with Anne because rumours have grown that her father could marry again, which would deprive him of Kellynch Hall if a son was born.

Towards the end of the novel, the Crofts come to Bath providing them with news from Uppercross and that Louisa Musgrove will marry Captain Benwick, a friend of the Harvilles and whom she encountered during her time at Lyme. Anne is delighted, her "heart beat in spite of herself, and brought the colour into her cheeks when she thought of Captain Wentworth unshackled and free" (166). Soon after she has had the news, Wentworth arrives at Bath, grows jealous since he supposes that Anne and Mr Elliot are in a relationship. Finally, he takes a second turn, writes Anne a letter in which he once again confesses his love to her and they become engaged. This time Sir Walter and Lady Russell approve of the marriage since the new Frederick Wentworth is richer and thus proves worthy of Anne.

### 3.1.2.2. Narrative Analogies

First of all, attention is once more invited to the fact that *The Lake House* refers to itself as a remake of *Il Mare*. However, the strong influence of the intertextual element of *Persuasion* on story, characters and themes in the film, triggers the question as to whether this remake is at the same time a literary film.

Although the similarities between *The Lake House* and *Persuasion* may not be at first sight striking, there are numerous parallels between them. The connections between characters, storyline and themes show the movie as a rewriting of Austen's novel, which is set as a model to follow both by Kate and Alex in the shaping of their relationship and also by Alejandro Agresti in the design of his own film. (Cano López)

Taking into consideration what has already been pointed out about the parasitic nature of remakes, it seems highly debatable if *The Lake House* may also be defined as a cinematic adaptation of *Persuasion*. If the film makers' intention had really been to produce another literary version of the novel, there would have been no compulsive need for another film to base the story on. Therefore, it must be taken for granted, as it is also written in the opening credits, that *The Lake House* represents a U.S. American remake of a South Korean film and as such it has to be dealt with. However, it is beyond dispute that when it comes to the analysis of *The Lake House*, the parallels that undeniably exist between the film and *Persuasion* must not be ignored but treated as what they are, i.e. intertexts.

Apart from the characters in *The Lake House* that share similar qualities with those in Jane Austen's novel, the most significant alteration between *// Mare* and its remake, i.e. the endings, is at the same time most suitable to the assumption of the novel's strong influence on the narrative structure of the film. Due to the re-circular ending in *// Mare*, it is clear that in the last scene the female protagonist has not had the chance yet to experience the events herself and therefore requires some explanation which she is given by Sung-hyun. At this point in 1999, i.e. basically at the beginning of their correspondence, the male protagonist is a stranger to Eun-joo and although she is certainly going to be provided with all the events in detail, the ending remains open since the audience does not get to know her response and can only guess if they come together. Thus, the question which is raised at the back-cover of the DVD as to whether or not their love can transcend time is unfortunately not answered in the film. The only substantial interpretation that can be delivered on the basis of the final events is that the only aspect in *// Mare* that assuredly transcends time is life.

However, in terms of Eun-joo's reaction to Sung-hyuns fantastic story,



one possible answer can ironically be found in the remake after Alex's and Kate's first conscious encounter at her birthday party. In a letter he tells her that they have finally met and when she asks him why he did not say anything, he simply explains that she "would've thought that [he] was crazy or drunk or both" (TLH 00:57:05 – 00:57:08). This scene can definitely be interpreted as some sort of criticism of the original. Approaching the ending of *// Mare* from Alex's point of view, love does not transcend time for a relationship between Sung-hyun and Eun-joo under such circumstances would have to be considered absurd and unrealistic.

In the case of *The Lake House* things lie differently. As the story does not return to its beginning, Alex is given the chance to meet the woman to whom he has written all the letters and therefore is not required to recount the events. In addition, it must be pointed out that although Alex may be fascinated by Kate in 2004, it is Kate in 2006 he really desires and loves, which represents an aspect that probably also holds true for Sung-hyun in the context of *// Mare*. It would be highly absurd to assume that the familiarity and closeness they have gained in writing all these letters could be maintained in a relationship between Alex and Kate in 2004. Moreover, the solution the audience is presented with in *The Lake House* eventually manages to transcend time and place since Alex's decision to wait two years permits him to encounter the Kate who is already in love with him. Thus, the letter in which Kate begs him not to come to Daley Plaza at Valentine's Day does not only save his life but also their love.

Even if this ending is entirely different from that in *// Mare*, the choice of establishing such an alteration was probably not made randomly but aims at showing *The Lake House* in a more romantic light. Thereby, the connection of the remake and its literary intertext is strengthened, and when taking a closer look at *Persuasion* it emerges that its ending is not all too different from that of the film into which it is embedded. In both narratives the characters need to overcome a variety of obstacles, time and space being two of the most determining ones, until they come together or as it is the case in *Persuasion* are reunited. As approximately 200 years lie between the novel and the film, it is not very surprising that the technique applied to establish temporal division in *The Lake House* differs to a great extent from the representation of time separation

in the novel. When Jane Austen's *Persuasion* was published posthumously in 1818, a temporal frame like the one created in the Warner Brothers film would not have been conceivable and would have transgressed against all rules and conventions of the Romantic period.

In contrast, the temporal setting in both films must rather be regarded as a product of the postmodern era and in greater detail movements such as magic realism and surrealism of whose repertoire the playful treatment of time and reality respectively represents a crucial technique. However, this does not imply that time is less important a factor in *Persuasion* for the novel is full of references to it. The reader soon learns that in the years after the end of Anne's acquaintance with Captain Wentworth "time had softened down much, perhaps nearly all peculiar attachment to him, but she had been too dependent on time alone", implying that nothing but time can ease her sorrow (26). Later in the novel, in a conversation with Captain Harville about Captain Benwick whose wife died only a year ago, Anne even reformulates what she has learnt from her own experience in some words of advice stating that "we know what time does in every case of affliction" (107). These are only two examples of a variety of passages in the novel that establish references to the aspect of time. Besides, one must not be oblivious of Anne herself whose "time is frozen at a moment of disavowed error", which implies that time stands still for the heroine from the very moment she gives up her true and only love (Wood 201).

Although Cano López has a point in stating that in *The Lake House* as well as in *Persuasion* "time is the major problem the lovers have to overcome, [i.e.] the obstacle that keeps them apart," one must not disregard the fact that time is more immediate and present as a problem in the film than it is in the novel. While Kate and Alex attempt to transcend time by finding a point in the time-place continuum at which they can be together, the situation of Anne and Captain Wentworth is far more complex. "Some of the suspense in the novel comes from the possibility of a second-chance for the hero and heroine. An opportunity already lost eight years before seems to heighten the necessity of reconciliation" (Stein 154). They certainly have to deal with the results of their longstanding separation but there is an even more important factor which they need to overcome, namely that of class rigidity. As it is revealed towards the

end of the novel, the underlying intention of Frederick Wentworth's decision to join the navy after Anne's refusal to accept his hand in marriage aims at nothing more than the improvement of his social status, a plan that undeniably takes time.

Nevertheless, one may conclude from these observations that the intertextual reference that is established to the novel goes beyond an interpretation of it as the mere existence of a book within a film. The similarities that are perceptible between *The Lake House* and *Persuasion* and the strong emphasis that is put on the intertext by means of repetition as well as citation and interpretation on the part of the characters provide enough evidence for the novel's enormous impact on the film's narrative world even if *The Lake House* does not represent an adaptation of *Persuasion* as such.

### 3.1.3. Detecting Intertextual References

#### 3.1.3.1. Overt Intertextual References

*The Lake House* is hallmarked by the repetitive use of *Persuasion* as an intertextual element and since repetition constitutes one technique of highlighting a certain element in a narrative, it can be assumed that there is more to it than just its mere presence in the film. "A LONG WORK LIKE A NOVEL [or a film] is interpreted, by whatever sort of reader [or audience], in part through the identification of recurrences and of meanings generated through recurrences" (Miller 1). All in all, *Persuasion* is centred on four times in *The Lake House*, establishing some sort of subliminal message the farther the film's story progresses. Its first appearance, when Alex retrieves the novel from the train station, represents in fact nothing more than its exposition by presenting the audience with the book in its physical existence (cf. *TLH* 00:35:11 – 00:37:01). Although the significance of the novel's content is not stressed at this point, the audience is made aware of its importance to the female protagonist. The scene is framed by two highly meaningful statements: at the beginning Kate points out that "it would mean a lot" to her if she could get the novel back and at the end Alex promises to return it to her one day since he perfectly

knows “how important it is to [her]”.

The second time *Persuasion* emerges is when Alex meets Kate at her birthday party in 2004 (cf. *TLH* 00:48:22 – 00:56:55). At this point, the audience is presented with a short plot summary, and first analogies between the novel’s content and Alex’s and Kate’s situation become perceptible. Moreover, as the short chat about its plot breaks the ice between them leading to a kiss at the end of the scene, the novel also gains importance in a more immediate way. However, their intimate dance and the kiss are interrupted by Morgan and similar to Anne Elliot’s and Captain Wentworth’s situation, they are torn apart. Although the characters in the film are not confronted with class rigidity as it is the case in the novel, they still have to respect the morals and social value system of our time in order not to lose the audience’s sympathy. Thus, Alex and Kate must wait until this problem has been sorted out and their relationship is less star-crossed.

As the love story in the film moves on, the intertextual references to the content of *Persuasion* become more and more concrete. The third appearance of the novel occurs right after the scene at ‘Il Mare’ when Alex does not turn up to their date (cf. *TLH* 01:10:54 – 01:11:07). Here, the audience is not provided with a neutral perspective on the book any longer but is rather confronted with Alex’s interpretation that leads to an explicit comparison to their own situation: “Don’t give up on me, Kate. What about *Persuasion*? You told me. They wait. They meet again, they have another chance” (*TLH* 01:10:54 – 01:11:03). Apart from the fact that Alex participates in an act of persuasion in order to convince Kate not to give up so easily, he directly compares their love to that of Anne Elliot and Captain Wentworth.

The final appearance of the novel is not only marked by its presence on screen but also provides the audience with a direct quotation from chapter VIII (*TLH* 01:19:50 – 01:21:20). Alex has apparently hidden the book beneath the floor of Kate’s flat at a time when the house was not finished. When Kate finds it, she notices that a dried rose has been used to indicate a passage of which she reads out a short line: “there could have been no two hearts so open, no tastes so similar, no feelings so in unison” (Austen, *Persuasion* 62). This citation probably represents one of the key passages of *Persuasion* where Anne’s

perspective of her emotional relationship with Wentworth is depicted. However, as no names are given in the citation, the audience is invited to perceive it as an allusion to Kate's and Alex's feelings.

Apart from this novel, two other intertextual references are established in the film. The day when she and her mother have lunch at Daley Plaza, Kate's attention is drawn to *Crime and Punishment*, which her mother carries around in her bag. However, in comparison to the intertextual connections which are established to *Persuasion*, *The Lake House* appears to remain unaffected by Dostoyevsky's novel. The third element that overtly alludes to a text outside the narrative is the restaurant 'Il Mare' at which Kate and Alex decide to meet. This is certainly to be understood as a reference to the South Korean film of the same name and therefore leaves room for interpretation. The image which is created by this scene is that of the female protagonist left alone at 'Il Mare', which can be interpreted as one possible reading of the open ending of the original film.

However, the function of *Persuasion* and the other two intertexts is by no means comparable, since the emphasis that is put on Jane Austen's novel with the help of repetition and allusion makes its importance for *The Lake House* clear and perceptible. Moreover, in terms of discourse-time, i.e. "the time it takes to peruse the discourse", far more temporal space is devoted to *Persuasion* than to any of the other intertextual references (Chatman, *Structure* 62). While only a couple of seconds are dedicated to *Crime and Punishment* and 'Il Mare', *Persuasion* occupies an overall discourse-time of approximately five minutes. Thus, one may definitely conclude that Jane Austen's novel must have enormous influence on the story of *The Lake House* as there would be no point in going all the bother of establishing such discourse-time consuming references without the intention to create a certain connection.

### 3.1.3.2. Focalisation

In *Persuasion* the reader is confronted with an unknown heterodiegetic narrator who exclusively presents the story from Anne Elliot's perspective. Thus, it can be assumed that the narrator's judgments of the actions and events are

probably very similar to those she would make if she was in the position to narrate the story. In the aforementioned citation, for instance, where Anne meets Captain Wentworth again, one is merely provided with her personal account and interpretation of the situation and his behaviour. Except for the letter he writes to her towards the end of the novel, there is no point throughout the whole narrative at which the reader is granted direct access to Captain Wentworth's world of thoughts and feelings. However, these characteristics render the whole narrative process rather unreliable since Anne's observations and her interpretations respectively are highly affected by her insecurity as regards Captain Wentworth's behaviour and intentions. His letter, in which he once more confesses his love to her, probably represents the most significant evidence for her misconceptions and misinterpretations of the situation and his attitude towards her. However, an aspect that may set the narrator apart from Anne's perception of her environment is the ironical tone which eventually engenders a comical depiction of her upper-class family.

In contrast, the narrative situation in *The Lake House* basically remains the same as in *Il Mare*. Large parts of the narration are included in the characters' correspondence and are cinematically realised by means of voice-overs in which they present the viewers with what they have written in their letters. Although both versions of the story lack a heterodiegetic narrator, except for the visual aspect immanent to the medium of film, the audience is presented with two narrative levels providing two different perspectives. Thus, it can be stated that in *The Lake House*, one is also provided with the world of thoughts and feelings of the male character which renders the narrative slightly more reliable.

However, an element similar and thus to a certain extent comparable to Wentworth's letter in the novel is Kate's last letter to Alex, in which she begs him not to come to Daley Plaza. In *The Lake House* misconceptions and misinterpretations are equally present but since Alex cannot bring light into the darkness, Kate has to find out about his death in another way. "To effect reconciliation [in *Persuasion*], each must discover how the other feels" whereas due to the different circumstances in the film, it is Kate who is obliged to write the elucidating letter after being confronted with her own misinterpretations as

regards the happenings at 'Il Mare' the other night (Stein 154). When she sees the drawing of the lake house at the architect's office and is informed about the accident in which Alex was involved, she suddenly realises that she has been wrong in assuming that he did not turn up that evening because he had changed his mind in those two years of waiting. However, even if *The Lake House* and *Persuasion* show great differences in terms of their narrative situations, these aspects still represent facets that are to a certain degree observable in both the film and the novel.

### 3.1.3.3. Characters

#### *Anne Elliot and Kate Forster*

In her essay Cano López provides a very useful character description as well as a differentiated comparison of the character qualities of Anne Elliot and Kate Forster. As regards her physical appearance, Anne's beauty has unfortunately vanished very early and even at times of youthful bloom her narcissistic father could not find anything special about his daughter's looks, "so totally different were her delicate features and mild dark eyes from his own" (Austen, *Persuasion* 4). After Alex has seen Kate for the first time at the train station, he describes her in a similar way, namely as having "long brown hair [and] gentle, unguarded eyes" (*TLH* 00:37:18 – 00:37:22). However, as opposed to Anne's father, Alex is delighted by Kate's beauty.

Moreover, Cano López points out that the two female characters "are related by their affinity for caring for others", which is self-evident in Kate's profession as a doctor but also Anne seems to take pleasure in nursing other people. Apart from the attention she pays to the inanities which seem to afflict her sister Mary, there are two other characters present in the novel for whose care she actively takes responsibility: little Charles Musgrove and Louisa Musgrove. "The boy, who is referred to as Anne's patient, is left entirely under her care while his parents [...] attend a dinner party" and in Louisa's case, when she falls and is knocked unconscious at Lyme, "only the heroine can react properly [...]. Everyone waits for her directions, and she finally commands one

of the men to fetch the surgeon" (Cano López).

In *The Lake House*, Kate's being a doctor is stressed right from the beginning when she reports at the hospital's control centre and is mistaken for a patient. In a confident and determined voice she introduces herself to the nurse as Dr. Forster. In the course of the film, two more scenes follow that show Kate nursing other people: in the first one she buoys an elderly man up and in the other one she motherly cares for a young girl. Moreover, a scene in which Kate's profession gains immediate importance is when the accident at Daley Plaza occurs where, similar to Anne at Lyme, she remains in total control of herself, calls an ambulance and administers first aid but unfortunately the man, who in the end turns out to be Alex, dies in her arms.

A further trait that the two heroines share is manifested in their pensive mood and the impression of their loneliness that they unremittingly convey. "Austen's heroine frequently retires, looking for solitude in order to reflect" and so does Kate when she drives out to the lake house looking for shelter (Cano López). Both female characters are reticent and when among a crowd of people rather position themselves on the sidelines of the narrative observing the actions from a certain distance. This quality is even more pronounced in Kate's character and becomes manifest, for instance, when totally annoyed she leaves her own birthday party choosing solitude over company.

However, what sets the heroines apart is Kate's willingness eventually to take action in order to save Alex's life and their love. In comparison, no similar development is recognisable in Anne's character that more or less retains that notion of passivity until the end of the novel. It can be assumed with good reason that her reconciliation with Captain Wentworth must exclusively be ascribed to his decision to write this letter as Anne is still convinced that there was nothing wrong in her breaking up with him at that time. All in all, one may conclude that a slight alteration in terms of gender roles and character development respectively is displayed in Kate's choice of actively taking fate into her own hands. While in Jane Austen's novels the male character usually writes the resolving letter by means of which a twist in the narrative is triggered, this part is assumed by Kate Forster in *The Lake House*.



### *Captain Frederick Wentworth and Alex Wyler*

A connection between the two male characters turns out to be rather difficult to establish since similarities in terms of character quality are not as transparent as they are in the female characters. Both heroes are said

[to be] adventurous and [to] have taken risks in their professions: Frederick Wentworth, after being rejected by Anne, went to sea and devoted himself to his career. Alex left Chicago because of his problems with his father. Rather than following his progenitor's footsteps, Alex wanted to find his own path. (Cano López)

Although arguments can certainly be delivered in order to support this description, it still seems rather far-fetched to pinpoint Alex's and Captain Wentworth's shared character qualities to the risks they have taken in their jobs. In fact, it appears that more effort has been put into the harmonisation of Anne's and Kate's impression on the audience, completely neglecting Alex and Captain Wentworth.

However, there is at least one trait that is comparably tangible in both heroes and which becomes manifest in their consistency in love even though they both have been rejected by the heroines. In Captain Wentworth's letter, the reader learns that his affections for Anne have always remained tender and passionate and that the only reason for his joining the navy was to make their love possible. He confides to Anne: "[d]are not say that man forgets sooner than woman, that his love has an earlier death. I have loved none but you. Unjust I may have been, weak and resentful I have been, but never inconstant. You alone have brought me to Bath. For you alone, I think and plan" (Austen, *Persuasion* 238). Consistency is similarly expressed in *The Lake House* although in this context Alex entrusts himself to his brother Henry since Kate has broken ties with him. When Henry advises him to forget her and to find a real woman instead, Alex replies with a serious face: "[w]hile it lasted, she was more real to me than any of that stuff. She was more real to me than anything I've ever known. I saw her. I kissed her. I love her" (*TLH* 01:18:26 – 01:18:46). The use of the present tense in the part of the love declaration, as opposed to the past tense applied in the rest of the statement, implies that he is still not

over the separation. Besides, this emotional persistency is also mirrored by the continuation of the correspondence on his part, even though he is aware of the fact that Kate refuses to read or answer his letters.

Another similarity between the film and the novel arises from the characters' family relations, this time allowing for a comparison between Alex and Anne. Both their mothers have died very young and the relationships to their fathers are highly complicated and complex. Anne's father apparently does not conceive any sort of parental affection to his daughter and sometimes even gives the impression as if he was not taking any notice of her existence at all. Right from the beginning of the novel, the reader is made aware of Sir Walter Elliot's narcissistic nature and his incompetence to act as an affectionate and caring father: "[t]hree girls, the two eldest sixteen and fourteen, was an awful legacy for a mother to bequeath, an awful charge rather, to confide to the authority and guidance of a conceited, silly father" (Austen, *Persuasion* 3). Although Alex's father can by no means be described as silly or dumb, there is still a highly narcissistic notion perceptible in his character which is comparable to that of Sir Walter's. Even if their narcissism roots in different traits, the effects on their children, i.e. pure neglect, basically remain the same. As a well-accepted and highly appreciated architect Simon Wyler has established his own business which has certainly taken its toll on him as well as on his sons and his wife. Alex refers to this problematic relationship with his father in one of his letters to Kate and confides to her that "the more successful he became, the more impossible he was to live with" (TLH 00:59:53 – 00:59:56).

As Cano López points out correctly, Alex gives the impression of being a more feminised character than Captain Wentworth, an aspect that she affiliates to the change of the masculine image over the last two centuries. "Whereas Captain Wentworth [...] tends to hide his sensibility beneath a veneer of masculinity, shrinking from revealing his true feelings till the final part of the novel, Alex presents a new model of sensitive man, one who is deeply in contact with his own feelings" (Cano López). This new form of masculine sensitivity becomes visible, for instance, after Simon Wyler has died and Alex starts crying over his father's memoirs that Kate has left in the post box for him and which are still unpublished at his time level. In comparison, the only point at

which Captain Wentworth's feelings come to light is within his letter to Anne towards the ending. However, throughout the rest of the novel, he embodies the classical image of virility, which is probably also strengthened by the lack of his perspective and the constant use of Anne as a focaliser.

### *Sir Walter Elliot and Simon Wyler*

The egocentric and narcissistic component of Sir Walter Elliot's character is emphasised very early in the novel: "[v]anity was the beginning and end of Sir Walter Elliot's character: vanity of person and of situation. [...] He considered the blessing of beauty as inferior only to the blessing of a baronetcy;" (Austen, *Persuasion* 2). In his aristocratic world view the two most important aspects against which all people are measured constitute appearance and social rank. He thus acts to some degree as a counterpart to Anne and Captain Wentworth. However, Sir Walter is not at all malevolent in nature and his flippancy must rather be interpreted as a means by which the author seeks to draw a comical image of the declining aristocracy of her time. As Kitson points out: "[i]n a series of complex and engaging comedies, Austen proved herself to be one of the most sophisticated and ironic commentators on the manners and mores of Regency England" (347).

While Sir Walter inherited his title, Simon Wyler has been obliged to work hard for his status and his reputation as a well-recognised architect, a factor that constitutes a huge difference between the two characters. Wyler is not in the least silly but, quite contrary to Anne's father, very intelligent. However, his effort as well as his ambition and ability unfortunately cannot compensate for his lack of emotional intelligence. The result thus remains similar to that in *Persuasion* since his obsession with the beauty of architectural shapes and forms probably represents the main cause for his neglecting his family.

Sir Walter Elliot's and Simon Wyler's narcissism is not only symbolised by the baronetage and the memoirs respectively, in which the life history of both is written down, but also by the deliberate use of mirrors and glass in connection with the two characters. Sir Walter's dressing room, for instance, is full of mirrors of different size and as Mr Croft points out to Anne, after he has

moved in at Kellynch Hall, “there was no getting away from one’s self” in this room (Austen, *Persuasion* 125). This symbolic notion of the reflected self is also captured in the lake house as such, which, completely made of glass, “represents a reflection of the architect’s own self” (Cano López).

However, a highly distinctive characteristic between the two fathers lies within their basic attitudes towards their children. While Sir Walter gives the impression of being totally indifferent about Anne, this is not the case regarding Simon Wyler. Under the guise of his gruff behaviour one presumably finds a bitter, tenacious but equally vulnerable man who has been marked by life. Although he is apparently disappointed and feels offended by Alex’s decision not to follow in his footsteps, it turns out in the course of the film that he still loves his son and thinks highly of his abilities and skills in the field of architecture.

#### *Mr William Elliot and Morgan Price*

Mr William Elliot is Anne’s cousin, heir to Kellynch Hall and apparently intends to make her his wife. In the course of the novel he is characterised as having “[e]verything united in him; good understanding, correct opinions, knowledge of the world, and a warm heart. He had strong feelings of family attachment and family honour, without pride or weakness; [...] He was steady, observant, moderate, candid” (144). Considering the effect of his personality and his deportment on the other characters, William can be regarded as good catch and meets all criteria as concerns the typical image of a Prince Charming (cf. Stein 148). However, as literature and especially that of the Romantic period has taught us, the seemingly flawless gentleman generally has some secrets to hide and sooner or later is usually unmasked as the exact opposite of the impression the other characters first have of him. Only Anne appears to sense that there is something wrong about him and her “suspicions [...] are validated when Mrs. Smith reveals that he has cheated her and her husband” (Stein 148). Towards the end of the novel, it is revealed that also his intentions to marry Anne are not respectable at all since the underlying motives are restricted to his concerns to keep Kellynch Hall.

In *The Lake House* Mr William Elliot has to some extent been recreated as Morgan Price, Kate's ex-fiancé and again boyfriend before she finds back to Alex. Although Morgan cannot be compared with Mr Elliot in terms of moral damnability, the Prince Charming image still remains attached to his character to a certain degree. He is settled, has a well-paid job, tries hard to be a good partner but tends to overshoot the mark with his attempts to impress Kate. He once tries to invite her to dinner at 'Il Mare', which unfortunately fails since the restaurant is booked up. When Kate learns that this has only been an attempt to win her back, she provides him with her views on his precipitate way of acting: "Morgan [...], you're always leaping ten steps ahead. We were dating [...] a week and you had our entire future mapped out for us. Still in my residency, you were picking out a real estate. I'd go to your house for the weekend and you'd have the entire town in your house to meet me" (*TLH* 00:39:45 – 00:40:03). However, with Kate giving the general impression that she is only in a relationship with him because he is 'real' and safe, he is perceived more as a henpecked husband than a Prince Charming.

#### 3.1.3.4. Themes and Motifs

##### *Architecture and the Construction of Narrative*

Architecture is an omnipresent and constantly recurring element in *The Lake House*. Except for Morgan, all male characters in the film are devoted to the profession of the architect and even before the audience finds out about the mysterious function of the mail box, they are presented with Alex working at a construction site. The most conspicuous element connected with the theme of architecture in the film is the lake house as such, which serves as a symbol of control and power. As Alex explains to his brother, inside the house "[y]ou're in a [...] glass box with a view to everything that's around you but you can't touch it. No interconnection between you and what you're looking at. [...] Containment and control. This house is about ownership, not connection" (*TLH* 00:32:59 – 00:33:28). Apart from the connection that is established between the symbolism of the lake house and the lover's situation, an analogous type of imagery can be

detected in *Persuasion* since Kellynch Hall, much the same as the lake house as regards control, indicates social superiority.

This notion becomes perceptible, for instance, when the Elliots have to move out of Kellynch Hall and try to find a new and less expensive dwelling place. “It would be too much to expect Sir Walter to descend into a small house in his own neighbourhood. Anne herself would have found the mortifications of it more than she foresaw, and to Sir Walter’s feelings they must have been dreadful” (Austen, *Persuasion* 13). With the loss of Kellynch Hall, Sir William simultaneously loses the symbol of his social status and of his reputation as a nobleman. The same discrepancy, though reverse, is to be found in *The Lake House* where the house loses its significance to Simon Wyler the very moment his wife divorces him and he forfeits his control over her. Moreover, the meaning of the two houses is equally important in terms of the two heroines since the “abandonment of their cherished homes contributes to [their] isolation and displacement” (Cano López).

The importance of architecture as a theme in the film is also tangible in a more general way within the constant presence of Chicago’s skyline until Simon Wyler’s death. There are about ten shots included in the film which exclusively show the skyline of Chicago or zoomed in parts of selected houses. During their separate walks through the city, there is even one shot split into three parts with Alex walking on the right and Kate on the left margin on the screen, being separated by a zoomed in façade of a house. This use of architectural elements in order to separate the two lovers ties in with the symbolism of the lake house representing control rather than connection. Being strongly linked to the field of mathematics and the natural sciences, architecture in general represents logic and thus functions as a thematic counterbalance to the aspect of time-transcending love, which actually violates all laws of nature.

Moreover, architecture is not only present in the form of symbolism and visual representation but also within the structure of the narrative as such. The intertwined narrative levels, the symmetric structure of the two time levels, the reoccurrence of certain elements and the interconnections that are established between the different scenes strongly hint at the narrative’s architectural quality. Seen from this perspective, *The Lake House* as such can be considered the

artfully constructed outcome of a narrative process that draws upon techniques from the field of architecture. Moreover, when considering the intertextual element of *Persuasion*, one may even suggest that the novel itself has been built into the narrative. From its first appearance on screen, it re-emerges every ten to fifteen minutes and strongly affects the audience's reception of the characters as well as their surroundings.

From a conversation between Alex and his father, the audience learns that one of the most determining factors in architecture is light since it has the power to influence the way art is received.

Although light enhances art, it can also degrade it. [...] [T]he light in Barcelona is quite different from the light in Tokyo. And the light in Tokyo is different from that in Prague. A truly great structure, one that is meant to stand the tests of time never disregards its environment. A serious architect takes that into account. He knows that if he wants presence, he must consult with nature. He must be captivated by the light. (TLH 01:02:30 – 01:03:17)

When considering the assumption that light has an enormous impact on a piece of art, the question arises as to whether the intertextual element of *Persuasion* may be interpreted as the light that falls on *The Lake House*. Any other novel would certainly have a totally different effect on the reading and the interpretation of the film as the characters and their surroundings would be presented in a different light. Thus, assuming the film makers to be serious architects in a figurative sense, it may be suggested that the intertextual element of *Persuasion* sheds a different light on the story in *Il Mare* and thereby creates a completely new atmosphere immanent in *The Lake House*.

### *Love and Distance*

In comparison to *Il Mare* love is far more present in *The Lake House* due to aspects involved such as Valentine's Day or Kate's love confession at the end of the film. Besides, the overall mood and atmosphere created in the original most often remains highly melancholic, which at least partly refers to the slightly different relationship of the characters. As Eun-joo is still not over the relationship with her ex-boyfriend, Sung-hyun frequently takes a counselling

position in their correspondence and thus rather gains amicable instead of romantic qualities. Although this melancholy is also detectable in Kate, the emphasis that is put on the emotional development of the characters in *The Lake House* goes beyond the aspect of friendship.

At the latest, this becomes clear in looking at the different endings of the films where both Kate and Eun-joo are shown kneeling in front of the post box crying and waiting for a reaction of the male characters. However, despite the scenes' similarities, the overall messages that are conveyed by the female protagonists strongly differ from one another. Although Eun-joo is noticeably in an agitated and desperate state when begging him not to go, she does not confess her love to him and even goes so far as to tell him not to do it for her (cf. *IM* 01:27:36 – 01:27:44). In contrast, Kate's reaction remains nowhere near vague and clearly reveals her intention to start a new attempt to be together when stating: "Please, don't go [to Daley Plaza that day]. Just wait. Please. Don't look for me. Don't try to find me. I love you. And it's taken me all this time to say it, but I love you. And if you still care for me, wait for me. Wait with me. [...] Wait two years, Alex. Come to the lake house. I'm here" (*TLH* 01:28:07 – 01:29:01). This scene represents the point after which all melancholy fades, giving way to a romantic atmosphere which is comparable to that at the end of *Persuasion*.

However, throughout the whole story of *The Lake House* love is virtually always linked to the aspect of detachment, which is, above all, traceable in the imagery of the lake house itself. A certain liability to distance is also traceable in Kate's personality and general behaviour since at work, for instance, she prefers to keep to herself and at her birthday party she chooses the silence in the garden over the razzle-dazzle in the house. In an act of self-characterisation during a conversation with one of her colleagues she even explicitly presents herself as a person who keeps everyone and everything at a distance: "[t]he man who was standing right in front of me, the one that wanted to marry me [...], I push away. I run from him. In the meantime, the [...] one man I can never meet [...], I would like to give my whole heart to" (*TLH* 00:47:17 – 00:47:39). However, even her attitudes towards Alex change after the incident at 'Il Mare' and in addition to their temporal detachment she also develops an emotional distance



to him.

In this case, the establishment of distance can be considered more or less synonymous to a shift towards a rather one-sided reality and a deconstruction of the magic notion of the situation the characters are embedded in. Kate draws upon the example of the man who dies in her arms at Daley Plaza the other day and tells Alex that life is too short to be spent dreaming about. The tragic irony of this scene roots in Kate's lack of knowledge that Alex is the man involved in the accident and that she actually breaks up with him because of his death. This fatal misinterpretation of reality as unreal is most interestingly accompanied and characterised by a rejection of *Persuasion* in the same scene, namely when Kate points out that "[l]ife is not a book [...] [a]nd it can be over in a second" (*TLH* 01:11:03 – 01:11:07). Thus, she abandons Alex and *Persuasion* attending to a future with Morgan and a reality that is emotionally distanced but comprehensible and, above all, safe.

The very moment Kate loses her belief in the possibility of establishing a relationship across time, another distance is created between logical reality as the sum of reasonable thoughts and palpable experiences and magical reality created by the aspect of time-transcending love. In order to overcome this distance and allow for a happy ending as well as the development of Kate's character away from her melancholic state, she needs to accept that both logic and magic represent facets of a more general reality which she is part of. Alex has already gone through this process of acceptance and, as has been mentioned elsewhere, has come to the conclusion that she is more real to him than anything else.

### *The Act of Persuasion*

There is no such conventional act of persuasion in *The Lake House* as there is in Jane Austen's novel when Mrs Russell advises Anne to end her acquaintance with Frederick Wentworth. However, what is detectable in the story of the film is the aspect of persuasion reverse, namely when Alex tries to convince Kate not to give him up. He even comes up with the argument that also Anne and Captain Wentworth have to wait and need to try more than once

until they can eventually come together. Even though *Persuasion* is her favourite book, Kate refuses to accept Alex's arguments and, in contrast to Anne, does not allow herself to be persuaded. Thus, it can be stated that in *The Lake House*, as opposed to the novel, a crucial factor that keeps the action running originates from the absent effect of persuasion on the female character.

However, both female protagonists, no matter if the act of persuasion achieves success, are confronted with and eventually submit to a socially shaped and highly biased perspective on reality with respect to what is decent/real and indecent/unreal. In Anne's case, for instance, Captain Wentworth falls short of the expectations of her family according to whom Anne should not marry below her social rank. Only by joining the navy he manages to enhance his status so as to render a relationship between them decent and realistic. Similarly, Kate needs to discover that Alex has not deliberately failed to appear on their date until she can once more come to trust him and accept their love as true and real in order to overcome both emotional and temporal distance.

### 3.2. *Pride and Prejudice*, *You've Got Mail* and *The Shop Around the Corner*

#### 3.2.1. *The Shop Around The Corner* and *You've Got Mail*

Much the same as *The Lake House*, *You've Got Mail* also hints at its being an adaptation, i.e. of the 1940 black-and-white film *The Shop around the Corner*. In addition to its status as a remake, though, the opening credits also reveal that even the original film already represents an adaptation from a play entitled *Parfumerie*, drafted by the Hungarian playwright Miklós László in 1937. Hence, when watching *You've Got Mail*, the audience is to a greater or lesser extent confronted with an adaptation at second degree which must also be regarded as an adaptation of the original play. However, these considerations probably lead too far when it comes to a comparison of the two films on the basis of the question as to whether a Jane Austen novel influences the narrative progress of the remake. In such a context, *The Shop Around the Corner* appears to be sufficient enough as a template to help detect given similarities and differences between the remake and the novel.

	<i>The Shop Around the Corner</i>	<i>You've Got Mail</i>
<b>Opening credits</b>	"Based on a Play by Nikolaus Laszlo" ( <i>TSATC</i> 00:00:34)	"Based on 'The Shop Around the Corner' [...] from the play by Miklos Laszlo" ( <i>YGM</i> 00:02:37)
<b>Protagonists</b>	Klara Novak Alfred Kralik	Kathleen Kelly Joe Fox
<b>Professions</b>	clerks (at the shop of Mr Matuschek)	runs her mother's book shop co-owner of book store chain
<b>Family relations</b>	no reference	staff at the shop Joe's father
<b>Intertextual devices</b>	Tolstoy's <i>Anna Karenina</i>	Austen's <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> 'The Shop Around the Corner'

Fig. 7 – Most basic similarities of and differences between *YGM* and *TSATC*

##### 3.2.1.1. Film Plots

Both films basically evolve around a love story with two people involved who

establish a letter or e-mail correspondence in which their identities remain unknown. Through this correspondence they grow more and more familiar with one another until they finally fall in love without ever wasting a thought on the possibility that they may already have met. In the case of *You've Got Mail*, the audience is introduced to circumstances right from the beginning of the film when both Kathleen and Joe are shown in their respective flats and, after their partners have left, head for their laptops. Later in the film, it emerges that their first encounter was in the 'over-30' chat room on Kathleen's birthday and although she had actually considered that to be a joke, they got talking to each other and soon noticed that they share similar hobbies and interests which is why they decided to keep in touch. However, during a conversation with one of her employees at her bookshop, the audience soon learns that this virtual friendship has somehow started to irritate her.

Meanwhile Joe, his father and his grandfather are introduced to the audience as being the owners of the successful bookstore chain 'FoxBooks'. The conversation between the three figures represents the first point where a connection to Kathleen Kelly is established and the audience learns that a mega store is planned to open in close vicinity to her bookshop. Kathleen and Joe's first encounter in person takes place only a couple of minutes later when he turns up at her bookshop, together with Annabel, his eleven year-old aunt, and Matthew, his four year old brother. At this point, Kathleen does not even know yet that he is the owner of the FoxBooks chain, let alone that he is the one she is about to lose her heart to. Later in the film, after coming to know who he is, she brings this situation up again and accuses him of spying. Although Kathleen first repudiates the menace that emanates from a FoxBooks megastore in her neighbourhood, she soon has to realise that her situation steadily deteriorates from the moment of its grand opening onwards.

She discovers Joe's true identity at a publishing party one evening where they have a somewhat heated discussion at the end of which she trains the pointed end of a knife at him. However, some severity is taken from this situation when their respective partners join them and start a rather comical chat in the course of which Kathleen and Joe mimic them. From this experience onwards they keep hiding and running from each other, no matter where and

when they accidentally meet in their everyday lives. In contrast, on the internet they still get along well and Joe even asks her if they should meet. However, before it comes to this date Kathleen tells him about the troubles she is in as regards her business and by citing parts of *The Godfather*, he calls her attention to the fact that she is at war and advises her to take the fight to her adversary, who is ironically he himself. At this point, it becomes more and more perceptible that the story heads towards a certain climax of the film, which eventually becomes manifest in their decision to meet.

Their date is arranged to take place at a café and so that they can recognise each other, Kathleen brings along a book, i.e. *Pride and Prejudice*, together with a red rose. She arrives first and makes sure that all items are neatly and, above all, visibly arranged on the table. A colleague of Joe's accompanies him to the meeting point and before Joe enters, he asks his confidant to have a glance at the people sitting in the café. Eventually, Joe discovers that the woman he has been chatting with during the last couple of weeks has been Kathleen Kelly but he decides to leave her in the dark. Nevertheless, he enters the café and joins her but does not reveal himself as her date. They start a quarrel in which they exchange some pungent words and Joe leaves.

In an e-mail, Joe contrives a pretext in order to apologise for his failing to appear for their date. In the end, Kathleen still has to close her shop and the plot strings begin to be drawn together. While still in contact with Kathleen over the internet, Joe also tries to reconcile with her in real life. He pays a visit to her when she is sick and for the first time leaves a favourable impression. Slowly but steadily, a friendship develops between the two in which he even takes a counselling position, encouraging her to renew her attempts to arrange a date with that man from the internet. She finally allows herself to be persuaded and is delirious with joy when she discovers that Joe has always been that person at the other computer.

In terms of *You've Got Mail*, one may conclude that the basic narrative structure of the motion picture has remained largely unaffected and similar to that in *The Shop Around the Corner*. Although the characters in the remake are embedded in a different context and are thus confronted with slightly altered

circumstances, Kathleen Kelly and Joe Fox basically still need to deal with and overcome the same difficulties and conflicts that Klara Novak and Alfred Kralik have to face in Ernst Lubitsch's film. As fifty-eight years lie between the original film and Nora Ephron's adaptation of it, a certain modification of the story, i.e. to the circumstances and the context of the 1990s, suggests itself in order to render the remake realistic and appealing to a contemporary audience. However, there is at least one scene in *You've Got Mail* that only features minimal changes and has almost literally been taken over from the original. When Kathleen and Joe meet at the café, they could be equally replaced by Klara and Alfred for, apart from the setting and the context, even some parts of the dialogues are identical with those of the equivalent scene in the original.

#### 3.2.1.2. Narrative Differences

Although the basic narrative structure of *The Shop Around the Corner* has certainly been retained in *You've Got Mail*, there are also many variations palpable between the two versions of the story. Right from the beginning of Lubitsch's film, for instance, the audience is informed that it is "die Geschichte von Matuschek und Co—von Herrn Matuschek und den Menschen, die für ihn arbeiten", which implies that the main focus rests upon the story of the shop (TSATC 00:01:16). As opposed to the remake, there are two dominant lines of action present in *The Shop Around The Corner*, the first of which covers Mr Matuschek's life in the shop as well as his wife's adultery with one of his assistants, Ferencz Vadas. The second line of action includes the secret correspondence between Klara and Alfred, which in fact represents the part that has been adapted as *You've Got Mail*. However, the highly present story of 'Matuschek & Co.' has almost disappeared in the remake and remains only faintly conjecturable in Kathleen Kelly's traditional bookshop which shares its name with the title of Lubitsch's film.

Apart from an extension to two shops in *You've Got Mail*, further differences are noticeable in terms of setting, which with the utmost probability refer to the different technical equipment the film makers had at their disposal at the time the films were produced. While the story in *You've Got Mail* practically

spreads all over Manhattan and is characterised by a frequent change of settings, the *The Shop Around the Corner* is limited to seven settings, of which four represent different rooms of one larger setting, i.e. 'Matuschek & Co.'. The spatial conditions in the original film must hence be rather considered more similar to those of a stage play than to the setting in which the story of the remake is embedded. Furthermore, the less frequent use of personalised shots, i.e. point of view shots or over-the-shoulder shots, in Lubitsch's film also adds to its reception as including drama elements.

An aspect that is found in *You've Got Mail* but is rather neglected in *The Shop Around the Corner* is concerned with progress and technology as opposed to habits and traditional values. The most conspicuous way this is expressed in the remake is the replacement of Klara and Alfred's letter correspondence with more progressive means of communication, such as e-mails and the chat. With the help of this substitution and the associated loss of handwriting as an exceedingly personal component of letters, Kathleen and Joe reach an even higher level of anonymity. Exactly the same aspect can also be detected in the philosophy of the FoxBooks chain, as opposed to the traditional values of 'The Shop Around the Corner'. When she finds that a megastore is planned to open soon in her neighbourhood, Kathleen trusts blindly in her client's loyalty and objects to all concerns uttered by her employees. In her views the FoxBooks megastore is "big, impersonal, overstocked and full of ignorant salespeople" (YGM 00:17:23 – 00:17:28).

Virtuality, anonymity and modernity are emphasised right from the beginning of the remake when the audience is presented with a virtual map of Manhattan and at the click of a mouse is led to Kathleen's house where the image is turned into reality. With Kathleen and Joe a variety of opposing ideologies are established, such as tradition vs. progress, personal consultation vs. mass consumerism or one-man businesses vs. trade chains. The aspect of tradition, for instance, becomes most prominent in their different ways of celebrating Christmas. While Kate spends the evening with her friends singing Christmas carols embraced by the warm surroundings of the bookshop, Joe finds himself enclosed by a rather chilly, stiff and demure atmosphere. However, such criticism at the social trend towards mass consumerism and

away from the traditional values is also expressed at other points in the story.

When talking about 'The Shop Around the Corner' with his father and grandfather, Joe learns that his grandfather once went on a date with Kathleen's mother. In this conversation the generation gap is made visible when old Mr Fox explains that letters were called mail at that time. His father sarcastically points out to Joe that they normally were used together with "stamps [and] envelopes", whereupon Joe replies in a not less sarcastic tone that "[he's] heard of it" (YGM 00:14:28 – 00:14:56). Resistance against the progress of technology is further perceptible in the character of Kathleen's boyfriend Frank, who favours a typewriter over a computer. However, the internet is not exclusively bad since if there was no virtual world, in which Kathleen and Joe, though anonymously, can get to know each other without any sort of prejudices against one another, there would probably be no chance for a happy ending.

### 3.2.2. *Pride and Prejudice* and *You've Got Mail*

#### 3.2.2.1. Plot of the Novel

The novel opens with a conversation between Mr and Mrs Bennet from which the reader learns that the wealthy, young and still single Charles Bingley has rented the manor of Netherfield Park. This causes quite a stir in Longbourn, the nearby village where the Bennets live, since "[i]t is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife" (Austen 6). As Mrs Bennet is obsessed with the wish of seeing her five daughters Jane, Elisabeth, Mary, Kitty and Lydia married, she certainly expects that Mr Bingley will decide in favour of one of them. At a ball soon after his arrival, Mrs Bennet's plans appear to be successful as Mr Bingley is immediately smitten with Jane and spends much time dancing with her.

However, the evening does not turn out to be as enchanting for Elizabeth, the second eldest daughter of the Bennet family and heroine of the story, who eavesdrops a conversation between Mr Bingley and his close friend Mr Darcy in which the latter refuses to dance with her since "[s]he is tolerable;



but not handsome enough to tempt [him]" (Austen, *Pride* 13). Even though he soon changes his opinion of Elizabeth after a couple of encounters at various social events, it is too late for any sort of advances because Elizabeth, as a result of this verbal slander, has formed an extremely negative view on Mr Darcy, whom she perceives as intolerably proud and arrogant.

In the meantime Jane's acquaintance with Mr Bingley deepens and even his snobbish sisters seem to have taken her into their hearts. One day Miss Bingley invites Jane to spend the evening with them but on her way to Netherfield she is caught in a heavy downpour and falls ill. As she is then forced to stay there longer than actually intended, Elizabeth decides to join them in order to look after her sister. During her time at Netherfield, Elizabeth is ever and anon confronted with Mr Darcy, who insinuates to her his intentions of getting to know her better; but she completely misinterprets his advances on the basis of the prejudiced opinion she holds of him.

When, after Jane's recovery, the two sisters return to the circle of the family, they learn that their cousin Mr Collins is soon going to pay a visit to them. The family has mingled feelings regarding this visit for, as Mr and Mrs Bennet have never had a son who could accept the inheritance, Mr Collins, as the nearest male relative, is the sole heir at law and therefore has the right to evict the rest of the family from their common house after Mr Bennet's death. However, in the course of his stay it emerges that he is less concerned with the matter of inheritance than with his search of a wife.

When he discovers that Jane is practically in a relationship with Mr Bingley, he elects Elizabeth, who is far from delighted with this choice for she thinks of him as a tomfool whose topics of conversation are mostly restricted to his benefactress Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Thus, she rejects his proposal whereat he is disgruntled at first but he soon finds a perfect wife in Elizabeth's best friend Charlotte Lucas. Meanwhile, the Bennet daughters become acquainted with the handsome militia officer George Wickham, who supports Elizabeth's negative views on Mr Darcy's character when consigning to her the story of how Darcy has managed to deprive him of his inheritance.

All of a sudden at the beginning of winter the Bingleys and Mr Darcy travel to London and Jane's hopes of a fast reunion are soon spoilt when

she has to discover that they will probably never return to Netherfield. After a Christmas visit at the Bennet's, her uncle and aunt invite Jane to spend some time at their place in London and everyone agrees that a change of scenery is certainly going to cheer her up again. In spring Elizabeth travels to Kent in order to visit her friend Charlotte, who has already become the wife of Mr Collins. On this occasion she also encounters Lady Catherine de Bourgh who eventually turns out to be Mr Darcy's aunt. She is a rich and imperious lady with an unmarried daughter, whom she intends to marry off to her nephew.

Mr Darcy, together with his cousin Colonel Fitzwilliam, also pays a visit to his aunt and to his own delight encounters Elizabeth, who, in a conversation with Colonel Fitzwilliam, gets to know that Mr Darcy has been the driving force behind the separation of Jane and Mr Bingley. She spends the rest of the day alone in the house when suddenly Mr Darcy unexpectedly calls on her, reveals his love to her and, in spite of their belonging to different classes, asks her hand in marriage. However, much to his surprise she rejects his proposal of marriage due to his arrogance and obnoxious conduct and holds him responsible for coming between Jane and Mr Bingley and for withholding the inheritance from Wickham.

The following day Mr Darcy delivers a letter to Elizabeth in which he comments on her reproaches: he owns up to having steered Bingley away from Jane but only because she had never shown any open affection for Bingley. In terms of Wickham, he enlightens her that the militia officer is a fraud and once started an attempt to marry Darcy's younger sister only to come into her money. Elizabeth is taken by this degree of forthrightness and yet while reading the letter begins to regret her words and the harshness with which she delivered them. However, he leaves before she can talk to him and soon afterwards she also returns to Longbourn. This scene is followed by a range of actions that completely reverse Elizabeth's opinion of Mr Darcy and when they finally meet again, he repeats his proposal and this time she accepts.

#### 3.2.2.2. Narrative Analogies

Apart from the similar qualities that are discernible in the main characters of

both the novel and the film, their common social relations have equally been adapted to the context of *You've Got Mail*. Bingley's decision to rent Netherfield in *Pride and Prejudice* in a way represents the gentry's penetration of the sphere of the middle classes. Although manners and society have been subject to constant change over the last two centuries, the most basic nexus between money, prestige and power has generally remained unaffected, as perfectly finds expression in *You've Got Mail*. In the film's context the aspect of being well-bred becomes manifest in Foxbooks' long-time existence as a family-owned enterprise. In the scene where Joe Fox first thematises Kathleen's shop in a conversation with his father and his grandfather, the audience is confronted with three generations of economic success.

Even his father's office with its interior design somewhere at the top of a tower block with a gorgeous view over Manhattan demonstrates money. In addition, this is even made explicit when Joe asks his father for the fabric of the new couch and the only reply he gets is that "[i]ts name is money" (YGM 00:13:19 – 00:13:20). Thus, it seems reasonable to claim that in the film the wealthy owners of FoxBooks invade Kathleen Kelly's neighbourhood in a similar way as the Bingleys penetrate Longbourn at the beginning of *Pride and Prejudice*. As a result, Netherfield manor and the FoxBooks megastore also gain comparable qualities in terms of their function as status symbols representing social and economic superiority.

In contrast, at the far end one finds the middle class engaged in the ongoing struggle with destiny and existence. The Bennet girls as well as Mrs Bennet, for instance, are at risk of losing house and home as soon as Mr Bennet ceases to be. This "was a subject on which Mrs. Bennet was beyond the reach of reason; and she continued to rail bitterly against the cruelty of settling an estate away from a family of five daughters, in favour of a man whom nobody cared about" (Austen, *Pride* 61). Thus, Mrs Bennet's only solution to these bleak prospects is to marry off her daughters as fast as possible. In comparison, it can be stated that Kathleen Kelly's existence is also threatened, i.e. by the opening of the FoxBooks megastore in the close proximity of her own shop. Although she neglects this danger at the beginning of the story, she must soon discover that the economically powerful do not only invade her

neighbourhood, as it is the case in *Pride and Prejudice*, but in the end even destroy the basis of her financial existence.

A further connection between *Pride and Prejudice* and *You've Got Mail*, and which is in fact also present in *The Shop Around the Corner*, can be established when the situation between the protagonists escalates into a quarrel at the end of which the male character, hurt in his pride, leaves the scene. In the novel this moment arrives when Mr Darcy professes his love to Elizabeth after she has just learnt about his involvement in Bingley's sudden departure to London. Towards the end of their somewhat heated discussion Elizabeth discloses to Darcy:

[f]rom the very beginning, from the first moment I may almost say, of my acquaintance with you, your manners impressing me with the fullest belief of your arrogance, your conceit, and your selfish disdain of the feelings of others, were such as to form that ground-work of disapprobation, on which succeeding events have built so immoveable a dislike; and I had not known you a month before I felt that you were the last man in the world whom I could ever be prevailed on to marry. (Austen, *Pride* 188)

This statement also marks the end of their conversation as Mr Darcy instantly apologises for having taken up so much of her time and hastily leaves the house. Kathleen Kelly's words produce exactly the same effect on Joe Fox when they meet at the café. During their conversation he has to bear one insult after the other but with her last comment on his lacking all sense of humanity, delivered in an extremely serious tone, she eventually manages to compromise him in more or less the same way as Elizabeth affects Darcy.

If I really knew you, I know what I would find. Instead of a brain, a cash register. Instead of a heart, a bottom line. [...] You poor sad multimillionaire. [...] You, with your theme park, multilevel, homogenize-the-world mochaccino land. You've deluded yourself into thinking you're some sort of benefactor bringing books to the masses. But no one will ever remember you, Joe Fox. [...] You are nothing but a suit. (YGM 01:01:04 – 01:04:21)

Right after this scathing criticism of his personality Joe Fox instantaneously ends the conversation with the words "[t]hat's my cue" and leaves the café (YGM 01:04:34 – 01:04:35). Thus, Kathleen and Elizabeth, respectively, quite

similarly abate their male counterparts' pride and thereby trigger a development in terms of their characters' qualities. As a result of the criticism they have been confronted with, both Joe and Darcy apparently start to reflect on the way their manners are perceived and eventually manage to grow with the task to overcome their pride.

In addition to the repercussions of this emotional scene on the male characters, further similarities can be observed in relation to the directions into which the two stories head afterwards. The emotional force unleashed in this section triggers a narrative twist introduced by a letter or e-mail from which the recipient deduces the other character's true personality. As Nora Ephron points out in the audio commentary of the film, "[i]n the 19<sup>th</sup> century, [in] almost all Romantic comedies all the misunderstandings are shifted when a letter arrives" (01:09:22 – 01:09:40). However, some distinctive features still remain between the novel and the film which are due to the slightly different circumstances in which the characters are positioned.

While Elizabeth accuses Mr Darcy of concrete deeds in the past, Kathleen's accusations remain rather vague and mainly attack Joe's overall appearance and personality. Thus, Darcy is given the opportunity of defending his views in terms of concrete actions whereas Joe Fox finds himself pushed into a position from where he could only apologise for the principles of the free market. In the context of *You've Got Mail* the male protagonist is hence deprived of practically all spheres of influence on the further development of the narrative, urging Kathleen to react to the given circumstances. In contrast to *Pride and Prejudice*, it is Kathleen who has to write the e-mail in the film on the basis of which Joe is given the chance to discover her true personality.

### 3.2.3. Detecting Intertextual References

#### 3.2.3.1. Overt Intertextual References

Just as *Persuasion* in the context of *The Lake House*, *Pride and Prejudice* equally represents a hallmark of *You've Got Mail* although it must be stated that the use of the novel as an intertextual element in Ephron's film is less repetitive

and thus leaves its importance as concerns the interpretation of the story less emphasised. On the whole, *Pride and Prejudice* is only centred on twice but still establishes this subtle notion of comparability in terms of content which has already been pointed at in the context of *The Lake House*. It first appears when the audience is presented with Joe Fox, completely bored, reading the novel upon Kathleen's recommendation that is simultaneously delivered in the form of a voice-over: "[c]onfession: I've read *Pride and Prejudice* about 200 times. I get lost in the language. [...] I'm always in agony over whether Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy are really going to get together. Read it. I know you'll love it" (YGM 00:15:53 – 00:16:16).

However, this scene does not only present the audience with *Pride and Prejudice* in the form of a visual citation of the book but also establishes an allusion to the 1995 BBC Series starring Colin Firth in the role of Mr Darcy. At the beginning of this scene the camera zooms in on the 1995 Modern Library paperback edition of *Pride and Prejudice* which has a huge picture of Colin Firth on its cover. When the camera zooms out, one recognises Joe Fox who is right in the middle of reading the novel. This emphasis of visually juxtaposing Joe Fox and Firth alias Darcy allows for the assumption that a connection of some kind must be traceable between the two characters.

The second and last time *Pride and Prejudice* appears in the film is when Kathleen and Joe meet at the café (cf. YGM 00:59:16 – 01:01:00). They use the novel in conjunction with a red rose as a symbol of identification and this time the audience is presented with Kathleen's version of the book whose cover only shows a woman whom one may assume to be the heroine of the novel. It may even be suspected that, apart from the visual link, also a more subtle connection between Elizabeth Bennet and Kathleen Kelly is established in the course of this scene. This assumption is further supported by a conversation between Kathleen and Joe only a couple of seconds later where Kathleen depicts Elizabeth as a highly complex character that Joe has probably failed to comprehend. On the basis of this statement, it may be even suggested that Joe misinterprets the complexity of Kathleen's character in the same manner as he misunderstands the heroine of *Pride and Prejudice*.

With respect to *The Shop Around the Corner*, *Pride and Prejudice* has

substituted another novel, i.e. *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy, which takes quite a similar function in the original film but only appears once when Alfred Kralik and Klara Novak meet at the café. Although *Anna Karenina* would not be of much use in the context of *You've Got Mail*, it definitely represents an allusion to Mr Matuschek's situation in *The Shop Around the Corner*. In the novel the protagonist Anna Karenina, just as Mr Matuschek's wife in the film, cheats on her husband with the only difference that not her husband attempts to commit suicide but the man with whom she has had the sexual relationship. However, as Mr Matuschek's storyline is completely neglected in the remake, a substitution of *Anna Karenina* by *Pride and Prejudice* appears to be a reasonable choice.

Apart from the novel, there is another intertextual reference discernible in the remake which, similar to the restaurant 'Il Mare' in *The Lake House*, establishes a reference to the original film. Apparently, Kathleen Kelly's 'The Shop Around the Corner' represents an allusion to the original film but also the atmosphere in the shop and the way the staff is presented as a huge family allows for a comparison to Mr Matuschek's shop. Thus, seen from a more general perspective on *You've Got Mail*, this intertextual reference may also be interpreted as a sort of nostalgia and homage to the good old times in which tradition and conversance were still of great importance.

### 3.2.3.2. Focalisation

The story in *Pride and Prejudice* is told by an unknown heterodiegetic narrator who mainly follows the plight of Elizabeth Bennet. The reader is thus primarily presented with the heroine's perspective on the course of the events although at times insight is also granted to the mind of Mr Darcy, an aspect which renders the narrator more reliable than in *Persuasion*, for instance. While in *Persuasion* the reader can only conjecture that Captain Wentworth is still in love with Anne, in *Pride and Prejudice* it soon becomes evident that Mr Darcy, in spite of his initial reservations, actually fancies Elizabeth:

Mr. Darcy had at first scarcely allowed her to be pretty; he had looked at her without admiration at the ball; and when they next met, he looked at

her only to criticise. But no sooner had he made it clear to himself and his friends that she had hardly a good feature in her face, than he began to find it was rendered uncommonly intelligent by the beautiful expression of her dark eyes. To this discovery succeeded some others equally mortifying. Though he had detected with a critical eye more than one failure of perfect symmetry in her form, he was forced to acknowledge her figure to be light and pleasing; and in spite of his asserting that her manners were not those of the fashionable world, he was caught by their easy playfulness. (Austen, *Pride* 24)

In addition to Mr Darcy's own viewpoint, the reader of *Pride and Prejudice* is intermittently also informed about the way other characters, such as Mr Wickham or Colonel Fitzwilliam, perceive and interpret his actions, behaviour and personality. Nevertheless, the major perspective certainly remains with the heroine and, similarly to Anne's situation in *Persuasion*, Elizabeth learns the truth about all circumstances in the form of a letter delivered to her by the male protagonist.

In contrast to *The Lake House*, the perspective in *You've Got Mail* is marked by at least one significant alteration in comparison to the film it is based on. While the story in *The Shop Around the Corner* is mainly presented from Kralik's perspective and hardly any insight is granted into Klara Novak's character until the second half of the film, Kathleen and Joe's perspectives appear to be present in equal shares in *You've Got Mail*. As *The Shop Around the Corner* lacks large parts of the female perspective and *Pride and Prejudice* only marginally indicates Darcy's viewpoint, one may suggest in terms of focalisation that the remake, with its expanded perspectives, represents a merging product of both the conditions in the novel and those in the original film.

An aspect immanent in the two films, however, which has to be regarded as completely distinct from the narrative situation in the novel lies in the protagonists' anonymous e-mail or letter correspondence. In the novel the reader is merely provided with the characters' world of experience which is restricted to the characters' own perceptions and their proper knowledge. Apart from a variety of ironical comments on the part of the narrator, there is no point throughout the entire narrative at which the reader gains insight into or knowledge of the story which s/he does not share with at least one of the characters that are part of it. This is definitely not always the case in *You've Got*



*Mail* since right from the beginning of the film until the scene at the café, where Joe discovers the true identity of his e-mail friend, the audience is granted more insight into the circumstances of the story than the characters themselves.

### 3.2.3.3. Characters

#### *Elisabeth Bennet and Kathleen Kelly*

As Kathleen Kelly emphasises in her discussion with Joe Fox “[t]he heroine in *Pride and Prejudice* is Elizabeth Bennet [and s]he is one of the greatest and most complex characters ever written” (YGM 01:00:50 – 01:00:56). However, the outcome of a comparison in terms of character qualities between Austen’s highly renowned and multifarious heroine of *Pride and Prejudice* and Kathleen Kelly, her rather shallow and lacklustre equivalent in *You’ve Got Mail*, does not appear to be very auspicious. Elisabeth Bennet combines a variety of different traits ranging from beauty via kind-heartedness through to keen wit, but what is probably most appealing about her character is the aspect of fallibility.

“Though she plays her part in a version of the familiar romantic plot, Elizabeth Bennet embodies a very different kind of femininity from that of the typically passive, vulnerable and child-like romantic heroine; her wit and outspokenness make her the most immediately attractive off all Austen’s female protagonists” (Jones XIII). It is exactly this outspokenness and her sharp tongue in conjunction with a liability to rash words that frequently puts her in a difficult position. However, in the end she always proves to be a strong, stable and serious character. Her most perceived flaw probably represents the prejudices she establishes in the course of the story against Mr Darcy’s personality but which she instantaneously revises as soon as she learns about the circumstances and the true motives.

Although similarities between Kathleen Kelly and Elizabeth Bennet are tangible, they are not as well-elaborated and well-established as it is the case in *The Lake House* with respect to Kate Forster and Anne Elliot. The main and almost only link between them lies in their respective prejudices against the male protagonist whose behaviour and personality they both misinterpret. Just

as Jane Austen's heroine, Kathleen is also eloquent, intelligent and well read. At times she even starts attempts to be witty but is not really convincing in doing so, nor is she really successful in establishing a resemblance to Elizabeth Bennet. In fact, she leaves the overall impression of being fragile and generally insecure. So, for instance, at the beginning of their discussion at the café where for "the first time in [her] life, when confronted with a horrible and insensitive person, [she] knew exactly what [she] wanted to say and [she] said it" (YGM 01:01:17 – 01:01:23). However, by thanking Joe for this breakthrough, the whole illocutionary force immanent in her previous statement is again relativised, making her appear slightly ridiculous and absurd.

As regards the overall reception of Kathleen Kelly measured against the background of Elizabeth Bennet's traits, one may well suspect that the film makers have tried to establish some sort of reference to Jane Austen's heroine even though the outcome remains rather unconvincing. In fact, Kathleen Kelly represents the type of character who is kind-hearted and would never harm a fly, which unfortunately leads her straight into bankruptcy. Her constant insecurity, which is mainly discernible in her body language and her self-deceit in terms of the menace that emanates from FoxBooks, frequently makes her appear a bit touchy and neurotic, a trait that is generally not observable in Elisabeth Bennet and which is interestingly also absent in Klara Novak.

### *Fitzwilliam Darcy and Joe Fox*

At first glance, the male protagonist of *Pride and Prejudice* Fitzwilliam Darcy is rich, arrogant, well-bred and most concerned about his social status. However, in the course of the narrative it emerges that beyond this aloofness rests a highly complex and upright character whose only flaw to overcome is his pride. Due to his seemingly arrogant appearance and behaviour in one of the first chapters, Mr Darcy is immediately made an outcast although, as Bingley confides to Jane, "he never speaks much unless among his intimate acquaintance. With *them* he is remarkably agreeable" (Austen, *Pride* 20). Moreover, the reader learns that after the death of his parents Mr Darcy, together with Colonel Fitzwilliam, has taken guardianship of his younger sister

who he takes great care of. In this sense, it may be suggested that the male protagonist gains qualities which are vaguely comparable to those of a Byronic hero.

The most prominent analogy between Mr Darcy and Joe Fox is probably established in the one shot where the audience is presented with Joe reading the novel with a huge picture of Colin Firth on the cover. In the 1995 BBC program, the actor has managed to bring the interpretation of Mr Darcy's character to its perfection and has thereby created a myth. "The phenomenal success of *Pride and Prejudice*, thus reflected in the continued prevalence of images from it so long after the original screening, is undoubtedly attributable in large part to the intense enthusiasm with which Firth's portrayal of Mr. Darcy was received" (Hopkins 113). Thus, the visual juxtaposition of Joe Fox and Colin Firth alias Mr Darcy renders an interpretation of the former on the basis of the latter plausible.

Although Joe Fox is far from a Byronic hero, more similarities are observable between him and Mr Darcy than there are between the two female protagonists. The aspect of social and economic superiority, for instance, has undergone a radical change from *The Shop Around the Corner* to *You've Got Mail* and in the remake rather tends to suit the circumstances of the story in the novel. While in the original film Alfred Kralik is highly afflicted by his unemployment as well as his impecuniosity and therefore even considers cancelling his date, Joe Fox does not have to deal with any of such aspects. From this perspective, he definitely bears more resemblance to Mr Darcy than to Alfred Kralik, who is not distinguished from Klara Novak in terms of his social status. However, even if the gentry's invasion of the sphere of the middle classes can be regarded as more analogous in the novel and the remake, there is still an imbalance of power observable in *The Shop Around the Corner*, which is engendered by Kralik's seniority in the shop.

A further analogy may be detected in the two protagonists' sense of responsibility and their deep connection with certain children and adolescents, which is above all palpable in Darcy's decision to take guardianship of his sister. Although Joe has not done anything comparable, his ability to connect well with children becomes evident when he spends an afternoon together with Annabel

and Matthew. They spend time at a street festival where the children have their faces painted; Joe buys them a couple of toys and even a goldfish, and eventually they make a last stop at 'The Shop Around the Corner', where for the first time Joe and Kathleen meet in person.

#### 3.2.3.4. Themes and Motifs

##### *Pride and Prejudice*

In terms of themes which are equally present in the novel and the remake, one must discover that an abundance of overlapping themes as in *The Lake House* remains absent in the case of *You've Got Mail*. However, there is at least one aspect that the novel and the remake share and which becomes manifest in the protagonists' pride and prejudices against one another. Although Elizabeth Bennet and Kathleen Kelly get to know their male counterparts under different circumstances, they are still both equally affected in their attitudes and perception by Joe's and Darcy's arrogance. On the whole, it can be observed that the aspect of prejudice mainly rests with the female characters, whereas pride must rather be attributed to the male protagonists. Thus, it can be stated that the manifestation of Darcy's arrogance and pride in his statements and behaviour to a greater or lesser extent serves as a breeding ground on which Elizabeth's prejudices can easily grow.

However, the situation is slightly different in *You've Got Mail* as Kathleen does not primarily bear Joe a grudge as the result of some erratic behaviour. It is rather the different values which their respective shops represent that make her jump to conclusions as regards his personality. Even though Joe Fox is undeniably an extraordinarily arrogant character, it seems more reasonable to assume that the two main flaws emphasised in the title of the novel are more likely to suit Kathleen's character. Just as Mr Darcy, she is proud of her inheritance and represents her traditional approach to bookselling and 'The Shop Around the corner' as far more decent and competent than the way a megastore distributes books.

Nevertheless, it becomes clear in one of the very first chapters of the

novel that the two protagonists are designed for each other but “[f]or the romance to be fulfilled [...] Elizabeth’s prejudice has to fall with Mr Darcy’s pride”, an aspect which equally holds true in the context of the film (Jones XXV). The novel and the film both function on the basis of the general assumption that pride and prejudice represent aspects in life which frequently block people’s view on the true character of a person. This phenomenon is even more present in the film due to the characters’ anonymous e-mail correspondence in which they seem to understand each other perfectly, even though they are so disgusted by each other in real life. However, this need for development represents the main force in both narratives which leads the characters to the point at which they can realise their short-sightedness. In Elizabeth’s case this enlightenment occurs after she meets Darcy again at Pemberley:

[s]he began now to comprehend that he was exactly the man who, in disposition and talents, would most suit her. His understanding and temper, though unlike her own, would have answered all her wishes. It was an union that must have been to the advantage of both; by her ease and liveliness, his mind might have been softened, his manners improved, and from his judgement, information, and knowledge of the world, she must have received benefit of greater importance. (Austen, *Pride* 295)

Although in *You’ve Got Mail* the audience is not presented with the actual moment of recognition, it becomes clear at the very end of the film that Kathleen Kelly has also discovered that Joe Fox is the right man for her. When he turns up in the park and she realises that it is he who she has been chatting with over the last couple of months, it can be deduced from her reaction that she has eventually managed to overcome her prejudices. This is then further underlined by the words with which the film closes: “I wanted it to be you so badly” (YGM 01:49:41 – 01:49:42).

## 4. Conclusion

Approaching *The Lake House* and *You've Got Mail* on the basis of Genette's concept of transtextuality, both films must be regarded as remakes, i.e. hypertexts, of other films whose basic structures and narrative situation have fairly remained unaffected in the adaptations. These apparent structural analogies and the open announcement of their relation to other films in the opening credits provide enough evidence for their status as remakes. However, the case is not as straightforward as it may seem at first sight since both *The Lake House* and *You've Got Mail* are characterised by intertexts that appear to go far beyond Genette's definition of citations and allusions.

Even when restricting one's view to what is evident, one may conclude that *Persuasion* and *Pride and Prejudice* perform various functions in the films into which they are embedded. First of all, they need to be regarded as visual citations since both novels are physically present on screen and a zoom shot of the cover even allows the audience to read its title and the name of the author. In the context of *The Lake House* the female character gives a direct quotation when reading out a short passage of *Persuasion*, whereas in *You've Got Mail* the viewers are presented with a rudimentary characterisation of Elizabeth Bennet. In both films a very short plot summary is given by one of the characters, providing the audience with the most basic information of the novels' contents.

In order to make the audience perceive the novels as crucial for the interpretation of the actions and circumstances of the story in the film, two factors, apart from explicitly stating it, can be considered determining, namely reoccurrence and the amount of discourse-time spent on the novels' audiovisual presence on screen. Both aspects are given in the films. A repetitive appearance of the novels usually occurs in the context of emotionally charged scenes that at times even trigger a twist in the narrative. Although *Pride and Prejudice* only appears twice in *You've Got Mail*, in contrast to *Persuasion* that is focused on four times in *The Lake House*, an overall discourse-time of over two minutes still remains quite a lot for an intertextual element that is basically meant to establish a reference to its source text but not supposed to tell a story

on its own. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that in *The Lake House* and *You've Got Mail* the use of *Persuasion* and *Pride and Prejudice* as intertextual references is beyond Genette's definition of intertextuality.

What happens then in the context of the two films is that in addition to the constant re-emphasis of Jane Austen's novels by means of repetition, various allusions are established to the content of the books, such as character similarities or structural analogies. So far, the novels as intertextual elements very much function according to Genette's definition of citations and allusions but what else emerges is that certain minor and major aspects of the films appear to have been adjusted in order to suit the circumstances in the novels more than those in the original films. Thus, one is given the impression that the films do not only represent hypertexts of other films but to some extent also constitute the outcome of a process which aims at adapting selected features of the novels.

Assuming that in the given contexts *Persuasion* and *Pride and Prejudice* transcend Genette's definition of intertextuality, it seems reasonable to challenge the question as to whether this remains their only function in the films. In fact, both novels, apart from their status as intertexts, also serve as hypotextual sources as to create further hypertexts within the remakes. Therefore, it has to be taken into consideration that in the case of *The Lake House* and *You've Got Mail* the audience is not only presented with a new version of the story in *Il Mare* and *The Shop Around the Corner* but in parts also with an adaptation of the novels. However, references to the hypotexts are created at two different levels in the films and thereby necessitate an extension of Genette's definition of hypertextuality by establishing a distinction between primary and secondary hypo- and hypertexts, respectively.

The stories which form the framework in the remakes are in both cases based on those in the original films, i.e. the basic narrative structure of *The Lake House* and *You've Got Mail* refers to *Il Mare* and *The Shop Around the Corner*. As both hypertexts cannot exist without a connection to the original stories, it seems reasonable to consider *Il Mare* and *The Shop Around the Corner* primary hypotexts. In contrast, the employment of *Persuasion* and *Pride and Prejudice* represents an optional choice, which makes the novels' content

less important for the actual existence of the remakes. Therefore, they must rather be regarded as secondary hypotexts whose absence would certainly alter the overall reception of the remake but would not render a continuation of the primary hypertext impossible. On the whole, it can be observed that the primary hypertexts represent some sort of narrative scaffolding on the basis of which the secondary hypertexts are created by adding nuances to the personality of characters, for instance, so that they bear a resemblance to the characters in the novels.

Although the *The Lake House* and *You've Got Mail* equally constitute adaptations of *Persuasion* and *Pride and Prejudice*, it would probably go too far as to classify them as literary films, like Cano López, for instance, does in the case of *The Lake House*. However, it would also be inaccurate to define them as mere remakes of *Il Mare* and *The Shop Around the Corner* for the influence of the novels certainly triggers an alienation from the original stories. Thus, the most reasonable conclusion one may draw from these observations is that *The Lake House* and *You've Got Mail* represent hypertexts that are based on two different hypotexts, i.e. film and novel, which makes them at the same time a remake and a literary adaptation.



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## 7. Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Basierend auf den Erkenntnissen der Evolutionstheorie erscheint es sinnvoll davon auszugehen, dass die Fähigkeit zur Anpassung dem Menschen grundsätzlich schon in die Wiege gelegt ist. Diese Tendenz und Bereitschaft zur Übernahme fremder Eigenschaften ist oft schon bei Babys und Kindern zu beobachten und erreicht ihren Höhepunkt wahrscheinlich im Starkult von Teenagern. Es ist somit auch nicht erstaunlich, dass Adaptionen unser Leben und unseren Alltag in großem Maße mitbestimmen. Trotzdem scheint es aber zugleich das Normalste auf der Welt zu sein, dass diesem Hang zur Anpassung und Uniformität der Drang zu Individualität, Abgrenzung und Selbstverwirklichung gegenübersteht. Dieses Prinzip gilt im Grunde genommen ebenso für Filmadaptionen, auch wenn Kritiker/innen in ihnen für lange Zeit eine massive Bedrohung der hohen Künste und vor allem der klassischen Literatur wahrnahmen.

Einen der ersten Meilensteine in diesem Kontext setzte George Bluestone 1957, als er mit seinem bahnbrechenden Buch *Novels into Film* die Eigenständigkeit von Filmadaptionen unterstrich und betonte. Nichtsdestotrotz war das vermehrte Aufkommen von Romanverfilmungen klassischer Autoren der englischen Romantik in den neunzehnjährigen Jahren noch immer stark von der Idee der Treue zum Original geprägt. Im Zusammenhang mit Jane Austen, beispielsweise, kann von Mut zur Individualität eigentlich erst mit der Produktion von Filmen wie *Clueless*, *Bridget Jones's Diary* oder *Bride and Prejudice* gesprochen werden, in denen der Originaltext in seiner Basisstruktur zwar erhalten bleibt, sich jedoch aber in einen komplett neuen zeitlichen bzw. kulturellen Kontext versetzt wiederfindet.

Besonderes Augenmerk sollte in diesem Zusammenhang auf Verfilmungen wie *The Lake House* und *You've Got Mail* gelegt werden, die nicht, wie die oben angeführten, die Basisstruktur der Romane beibehalten, sondern sich offiziell zu ihrem Status als Remakes bekennen, jedoch aber als intertextuelle Elemente *Persuasion* und *Pride and Prejudice* in die Handlung mit einflechten. Obgleich die primär erkennbaren Handlungsstrukturen von *The Lake House* und *You've Got Mail* eher mit jenen der Originalfilme vergleichbar



sind, kommt man in einer genaueren Analyse nicht umher erkennen zu müssen, dass die Präsenz der Romane einen starken Einfluss auf die Charaktere und die Handlung der Filme hat. Die Frage, die sich einem in diesem Zusammenhang nun schon fast aufdrängt, ist dann jene, ob die beiden Filme lediglich als Remakes zu verstehen sind oder ob es sich in diesem Fall um eine Art Mutation handelt, die zugleich auch eine Literaturverfilmung ist.

Als Analysemodell bietet sich in diesem Kontext Genettes Theorie der Transtextualität an, in dem der Literaturtheoretiker die Beziehungen von Texten in fünf verschiedenen Kategorien übersichtlich zusammenfasst. Die zwei relevanten Dimensionen für eine Analyse der Beziehungen zwischen *The Lake House* bzw. *You've Got Mail* und den Originalfilmen bzw. den Romanen werden in diesem Konzept als Intertextualität und Hypertextualität definiert. Bei genauerer Betrachtung der Umstände stellt sich heraus, dass die Funktion von *Persuasion* und *Pride and Prejudice* sich nicht nur auf die intertextuelle Dimension beschränkt, sondern beide Romane zugleich Hypotexte darstellen, von denen bestimmte Aspekte der Filme in Form von Hypertexten abgeleitet wurden. Daraus folgt, dass *The Lake House* und *You've Got Mail* sowohl Remakes als auch Literaturverfilmungen darstellen, da es sich bei ihnen um Hypertexte handelt, die zugleich auf zwei verschiedenen Hypotexten basieren.

# Curriculum Vitae

## Angaben zur Person

Nachname / Vorname	<b>NEHYBA Robert</b>
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## Schul- und Berufsbildung

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Seit 2002	Individuelles Diplomstudium: Internationale Entwicklung Universität Wien
2001- 2010	Lehramtsstudium: UF Englisch und UF Französisch Universität Wien
1993 - 2001	Allgemeinbildende höhere Schule Kleine Sperlgasse 2c, 1020 Wien
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Seit 2007	Maturaschule Dr. Rampitsch <i>Engischlehrer</i> Vorbereitung der Schüler/innen auf die Ablegung der Matura im Rahmen einer Externistenprüfung, Erstellung von individuellen Semesterplanungen
Seit 2007	Institut für Lernhilfe (IFL) <i>Nachhilfelehrer in den Fächern Englisch und Französisch</i>
2005 - 2007	Schülerhilfe Humer <i>Außendienst und Nachhilfelehrer in den Fächern Englisch und Französisch</i> Betreuung und Koordination der damals 11 Wiener Filialen, Kundenbetreuung in Form von Elterngesprächen, Abrechnungen, Stundenplankoordination, Leitung von Workshops für Nachhilfelehrer/innen
2005	Caritas der Erzdiözese Wien <i>Administrationstätigkeit in einem sozialökonomischen Beschäftigungsprojekt (benefit_work)</i> Vorbereitung der Buchhaltung, Kassa, Abrechnung, Einkauf, Unterstützung der Projektleitung beim Verfassen von Berichten, Recherche
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